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A Challenge to France

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THE New Year opens with preparations for another Conference to deal with our present discontents. Everybody in this country, at least, is eager for a grand clear-up of the whole mess of debts and reparations and gold and tariffs. But the Americans are sulking in their tents, and France is infinitely cautious, and we may get no more than another attempt to prop up the crumbling edifice of Germany. We discuss in a leading article the policy which we should like to see—and which we believe the vast majority of Englishmen would like to see—pursued by the British Government. Failing this, there will presumably be another moratorium for a year or for two years. But to shelve the problem is not to solve it, and there is little reason to hope that Germany or anyone else will settle down happily without a solution. All the omens point to 1932—even with a suspension of debts and reparation payments—being a worse year than 1931.

* * *

The Basle Report has been received with a strange complacency by the greater part of the French press. For this document is hardly favourable to what Pertinax of the *Echo de Paris* calls "the permanent doctrine" of France—viz., that a moratorium must not exceed two years (as provided in the Young Plan), and that Germany must go on paying the unconditional annuities in any circumstances. In direct conflict with this doctrine, the French expert has agreed that the Young Plan foresaw not only a steadily increasing world trade, but also a slowly increasing value of that trade; that the safeguards contained in the Plan were never designed to meet such a crisis in values as the present; that Germany, after her fourth Emergency Decree, can stand no more. What then remains? Surely, that France and America must either keep to gold, deflation, and lower prices, in which case they increase the burdens on Germany and postpone hopes of reparations and debt settlements; or that they must act in concert with the "off-gold" countries to do what the Macmillan Committee recommended—that is, raise the international price-level to that obtaining in 1928, when the Young Plan calculations of Germany's paying-capacity were made. A middle course would be the scaling-down of all international commitments to harmonise with the present low level of world prices, reckoned in gold. If, however, the Governments treat this Report as they treated the warnings of the Wiggin Report last August, then the world may very soon get what the Basle experts term an "extremely disquieting setback"—in other words, complete financial collapse.

Although the news from India is frankly disturbing it is possible, taking a long view, to find some comfort in the fact, which is now becoming apparent, that there are several sections of the population which are not prepared to leave the Congress a monopoly of all political activity. Unfortunately the Viceroy was fully justified in saying that the recent policy of the Government has caused doubt and bewilderment. So far little has been done to encourage those Indians who are opposed to the present system of government but willing to co-operate in bringing another into being. The appointment of the British Parliamentary members of three committees has not helped matters. With the exception of Lord Lothian there is not a single name amongst them which conveys anything to the Indian politician; there are still doubts about the procedure to be adopted, and, above all, there is as yet no sign that the Government mean to keep the Federal Structure sub-committee in being, or appoint a working committee from it. They are definitely pledged to do so, and such a committee would be immensely important during the coming year in co-ordinating the work done by other bodies. The Indian members would be able to see that no unnecessary delays occurred, and to help in persuading their fellow-countrymen that the formation of a Federal Government was being pushed on as rapidly as possible.

* * *

The tragi-comedy in the Far East proceeds without a hitch. Mr. Inukai, the Japanese Prime Minister, announced the other day that Japan did not want Manchuria: she would not accept it even as a gift, for it would be far too costly to defend. Japan's only desire is to protect her treaty rights; as soon as normal conditions are restored we shall see the "open door," and foreigners will be warmly welcomed. All of which shows a very kindly spirit on the part of the Japanese; few nations would be so altruistic in disposing of other people's countries. Meanwhile the Governments of Great Britain, France and the United States have been audacious enough to express their concern at the Japanese advance on Chinchow. To which Japan replies that it is necessary to drive the Chinese out of Chinchow in order to "restore normal conditions," for the Chinese military authorities there are instigating the bandits. Anyhow the town is expected to be in Japanese hands within a day or two—and that's that! One of the journalists with the Japanese armies (we must not call him a war-correspondent, since we are told there is no war) tells us that the final phase is now near. "Final" is good!

* * *

The entire spinning section of the cotton industry is now without any agreement governing wages, hours and working conditions. The employers' notice ending the agreement of 1919 has run out; and so far there has been no attempt to re-open negotiations since the Trade Unions' refusal to discuss the extension of the working week beyond forty-eight hours. This may not mean a general stoppage; for the master spinners show no intention of enforcing a general lock-out. But the Trade Unions have given notice of their intention to stand out firmly against any attempt to worsen conditions, and particularly against any attempt to prolong the weekly hours of labour. What may happen is that individual employers, now that the agreement is no longer in force, will try to apply lower wages and extended hours by sectional action. This will be met by sectional strikes; and, in accordance with Lancashire tradition, sectional stoppages may easily broaden out into a general strike or lock-out. The action of the master spinners is particularly unfortunate at a moment when a scheme for the reorganisation of the industry, to which the operatives are a party, is hanging in the balance. The master weavers have refused to join the master spinners in precipitating a crisis; and there is a substantial minority among the spinners themselves that disapproves of what has been done. It is absurd to suppose that an extension of working hours will enable the cotton industry to regain its lost trade, or that so retrograde a step as the abandonment of the forty-eight hours' week could possibly be accepted without a bitter struggle.

* * *

Sir John Gilmour's first list of duties—the "broccoli taxes" as perhaps they will be called—was published on Tuesday. They represent what is undoubtedly, to date, the most fatuous of the Government's essays in protection. Their fiscal importance is negligible, since the list only covers vegetable products which are luxuries or semi-luxuries. The poor man's tomato, for instance, whose cause was so fervently pleaded in the House, has saved himself by his exertions; though he has not saved cherries or plums by his example. Nevertheless, the indirect effects of these nasty little taxes will be considerable. They will serve to widen the growing breach between "free handers" and "mailed fisters"; and they will stimulate—by their very pernicketiness—the appetite of the protectionists. Such interference with greengrocers' and fruiterers' business will inevitably have a cramping effect, and some rise in the price of vegetables generally will follow; however carefully you select your objects of taxation, you cannot isolate their consequences.

* * *

The three hundred and twenty M.P.s who have sent the Prime Minister a memorial about the reorganisation of the Post Office are mostly Conservatives, and all supporters of the Government; but a great many people who do not share their politics will agree with the greater part of what they say. The present organisation of the Post Office is idiotically obsolete, and it is a wonder that, in spite of it, the service works reasonably well. It is absurd to attempt to run a great industry on the lines of a Civil Service department; it is absurd to keep it in the daily leading-strings of unimaginative and inappropriate Treasury control; and it is absurd to confiscate all its surpluses to the Exchequer at the end of the financial year. Obviously, it ought to be run as a business undertaking as well as a public service; and there is no reason why the two should not be reconciled. The memorialists themselves explain that they differ about the form which reorganisation ought to take; and probably we should differ from most of them if they expounded their positive views as well as their criticisms of the present system. But these criticisms are undoubtedly vital and important; and there is every reason, as Major Attlee, the late

Postmaster-General, pointed out in our columns not long ago, why the department should be thoroughly reorganised from top to bottom. The memorialists, by the way, quote Major Attlee's article with approval.

* * *

Reports continue to reach us of the application of the "means test" by Public Assistance Committees. It appears that a good deal of money is being saved in areas where a drastic investigation is carried out. At Bradford, it is said, benefits are being cut down by something like £1,000 a week; at Newcastle-on-Tyne the saving was £3,444 up to December 8th. In the latter area about 18 per cent. of the applicants were refused any benefit, in the former—as also in Leeds and Bradford—about 30 per cent. In a large number of cases, of course, a reduced allowance is given; the lowest amount that we have heard of is 3d. a week. The Public Assistance authorities are still worried by their job, and complaints of the lack of uniformity are persistent. So too are complaints of the ruthlessness of the inquisition; many Committees busy themselves in hunting out people even a couple of hundred miles away who may be induced or pressed to contribute to the support of unemployed relatives. And in Derbyshire we learn that employers have received forms asking them to state the earnings of employees whose relations were applying for transitional benefit. Is not this carrying zeal pretty near the limit of decency?

* * *

An important move towards the reduction of the Government's short-term indebtedness is announced this week. Savings Certificates of the first issue (the original "War Savings" Certificates) are still to a large extent unredeemed; they represent an aggregate indebtedness of about £150,000,000. A certificate bought for 15s. 6d. in 1915 is now worth some 33s. Under the scheme launched this week, holders are to be given three options (in addition, of course, to the option of retaining their certificates): they can take in exchange 4½ per cent. Conversion Loan, 4 per cent. National War Bonds, or a new form of security called Conversion Certificates. These latter carry for a ten-year period tax-free interest at the rate of £4 2s. 9d. per cent.—a higher rate than is obtainable if the Savings Certificates are retained as such. The options are nicely balanced, but for the small investor Conversion Certificates are probably the most attractive of the three.

* * *

The Trade Unions are still bombarding the Government about financial help for the abandoned Cunarder. But the Prime Minister is obviously right in saying, in a letter to Mr. Will Thorne, that the real difficulty is not the raising of money for the work of construction, but the fear that the ship would not pay if she were built. If the Cunard Company were willing to go ahead, the money could be found; but the company has no wish to borrow capital in order to build a vessel that will have to be run at a loss. It is true that the Cunarder would take two years to finish, and that no one knows what the state of trade and transatlantic transport will be in two years' time. But can the Cunard Company be expected to gamble on the prospect of the slump being over? The suspension of work on the vessel is a sad blow for the Clyde shipyard workers; and it is quite natural that they should want the construction to go on. But the Cunard Company, like other capitalist concerns, is not in business for its health, and would soon go bankrupt if it were. The fate of the new Cunarder is simply one of the many effects of the world slump, no different in its nature from hundreds of other cases in which projected capital extensions of business have been set aside because they do not offer a sufficient prospect of profit. What is wrong is an unorganised system under which such slumps are inevitable.

* * *

Reports of the disastrous effects of electing local councillors solely on the grounds of patriotism come to us from all parts of the country. One of the worst comes from Shoreditch, whose Borough Council has just rescinded a previous resolution to establish a Women's Hospital. The building for the hospital is actually going up and the cost of the whole scheme, approved by the Ministry of Health, was estimated at a little over a farthing rate per annum. The previous Labour majority had realised the disgrace of our present maternal death-rate and had planned a hospital to deal with all problems connected with the health of working women. The principal objection raised was that amongst other medical treatment birth-control advice would necessarily play a part. One hardy councillor stated that facilities for birth-control information were already in excess of the need for it. Perhaps a relevant comment on this bold statement would be a quotation from the last Annual Report of the Shoreditch Medical Officer of Health, who showed that in four out of seven recent maternal deaths, abortion was an associated cause of death. What is one to say of the mentality of comfortable people who prefer these tragedies of ignorance to the spread of medical knowledge?

* * *

We are not in the least surprised at the outcry against the new National Prayer prepared by the S.P.C.K. For it is an unusual prayer, one which actually specifies national sins and individual trespasses. This is naturally distasteful. There is nothing invidious about going to church and asking to be kept this day without sin if the sin is not mentioned and if the worshipper knows that he is in any case shortly going to church again to admit the failure of his first prayer, to state that he has erred and strayed like a lost sheep and that there is no health in him. In this way we are all lumped together as miserable offenders. But when it comes to a prayer which asks forgiveness because "we have indulged in national arrogance," the Imperialist begins to wonder if some one is getting at him, and the Beaverbrook press raises the alarm. When we are asked to say that we forgive those that "have injured us by crooked dealing, by scamped work or by exploitation," the idiom seems to the *Times* to smack of "a political pamphlet"; and eminent clerics write letters invoking the shade of Cranmer and asking if there is "no competent liturgiologist within reach of Lambeth and York?" The language of this prayer may seem commonplace by the side of the poetic phraseology of the old collects, but we suggest that such criticism will always be levelled against any prayer which tries to remove our national sins from the sphere of safe generalities.

A CHALLENGE TO FRANCE

Germany's problem, which is to a great extent the cause of the increasing financial paralysis of the world, calls for common action by the Governments. It is a world problem. . . . The adjustment of all reparations and war debts—and this adjustment should take place without delay if new disasters are to be avoided—is the only lasting step capable of re-establishing confidence.

THERE is nothing new or startling in these conclusions of the Basle experts. Their report in the main only dots the i's and crosses the t's of the all too familiar story of German bankruptcy. Their argument is framed in terms of compromise calculated to give a minimum of satisfaction to the parties concerned. The French congratulate themselves that the Young Plan is intact; Dr. Brüning regrets the absence of any large-minded proposals. And the shadow of American intransigence hangs over all. Nevertheless, the Basle report is a momentous document. It forces the politicians to act and, what is more, it gives the British Government the opportunity of insisting that the action shall be a break with the pottering methods of the past ten years. It is a challenge.

The Conference that is to be held this month will be heavily handicapped. The resolutions of the United States Congress have destroyed for the present any hope of America's being a party to the solution of the world problem. An American banker was one of the signatories of the Basle report, but he is a prophet without honour in his own country. It is highly improbable that President Hoover will have the audacity to send an "observer" to Lausanne or the Hague or wherever the meeting is held. And so the "common action"—if there is indeed to be any—must be confined to this side of the Atlantic. But what does common action mean, beyond going together into a Conference? There has been a great deal of speculation about a letter from Mr. MacDonald to M. Laval. We do not ourselves attach much importance to this; but we do attach importance to French comments on it and on some of the assumptions of the Basle report. The Paris press is talking hopefully of France and Great Britain "pursuing a united policy" and—sinister word!—reviving the *entente cordiale*. Now if this meant that France and Great Britain, as the two principal Powers and the two principal creditors of Germany, should act together and with Germany in clearing up the mess, we should want nothing better. But does it mean that? Do the attitude of Professor Rist at Basle and the attitude of the French Government and of French publicists and journalists in general encourage any such belief? Quite patently they do not. There is no sign yet of the leopard changing his spots. And while the policy of France remains what it is, and what it has been for the past decade, Englishmen must be not merely suspicious of it, but definitely hostile to it.

On another page of this issue we publish a review of a book which is a damning indictment of French policy. The author may have prejudices and he may exaggerate, but substantially his charges are true. France has acted consistently for her own ends—the perpetual suppression of Germany and the hegemony of the Continent. She had in the early stages active support from us. When this fell off, she got her way by cajoling us or ignoring us. And finally she struck openly at us. It may be that by driving us off the gold standard she has done us and the world a service, and her own ambitions a mischief; that remains to be seen. But at the moment she still stands as the leader of the narrow nationalistic spirit in Europe, the chief prop of armaments, the champion of reactionary finance, the implacable creditor. She knows she cannot get her pound of flesh from Germany this year or perhaps next year. But she will get what ounces she can, and she will abate no claim for the future.

Is this an unfair picture? M. Laval will prove whether it is or not in a few weeks' time. If he shows that French policy is more generous and more enlightened than we and the bulk of mankind have thought it to be, he shall have all the apologies he is entitled to. In the meantime, however, we must base our expectations—and the British Government ought to base their plans—on the facts that are plain to everyone. We do not know what plans, if any, are being excogitated in Downing Street. But we can envisage one kind of plan which would be deplorable, and another kind which would command the overwhelming support of British public opinion. The first kind consists in restricting the scope of the Conference within the narrowest possible limits, in co-operating with France against Germany, in upholding the Treaty of Versailles, the Young Plan and all the rest of the pretentious rubbish, against the bolder solution which is advocated, however guardedly, in the Basle report. That is not in reality a plan at all; it is no more than a counsel of despair, and its adoption by Mr. MacDonald would bring him and his Government into utter contempt. The second involves Great Britain taking the initiative and insisting on a far-reaching "adjustment of reparations and war debts." We say far-reaching rather than complete, because there can obviously be no complete adjustment till the backwoodsmen of America have awakened from their dreams.

Suppose then that we declare plainly for making an end of the farce of reparations. Few of us believe that Germany is ever going to pay any more annuities, and a moratorium is a mere pretence. Let us propose to cancel the whole lot. If France says "No" we can still say "Yes," so far as our share is concerned. That will, admittedly, involve our defaulting to the United States, since we cannot go on sending something like £50,000,000 a year to New York out of our own pockets; the Balfour Note made it clear that our payments to America were to be balanced by our receipts from Europe. Repudiation is, no doubt, an ugly word, but as a thing it is common sense. Nor need we in all the circumstances feel scruples on moral grounds. There is no question of fraudulent gain. Little, if any, of the money that we borrowed from Americans during the war went into our pockets or was used directly by us. Moreover, the repayment of the United States is not only a difficulty to its debtors; it is a positive misfortune to the United States. Of all this a great body of sensible Americans is well aware. The others—who think we have a mine of gold which ought to be in their vaults, or who ask, as an alternative, for the West Indies or the contents of the National Gallery—will presently be converted. Meanwhile, they are likely to take our default less to heart if they see that we are trying to

put the European house in order. And we can, if we will, give them another earnest of our good intentions by coming forward at Geneva in February with a programme of cuts in armaments. As for France, it will be for her to agree with or to oppose this plan, as she chooses. If she opposes it, and insists on the continuance of reparations, we should presumably require her to continue paying her war debt to us and, to the extent that we get any interest from her, we should continue to pay America. In fact, France would of course not pay us, and the matter would simply be in abeyance till the French and the Americans came out of their asylums.

But this is not all. The world problem referred to in the Basle report is not merely the problem of putting Germany on her feet. The whole international currency system has gone to pieces, and the Governments ought to set about mending it. The French, like everybody else, are interested in this, but their remedy is not one that we can accept. We do not particularly want to return to gold, and we shall certainly not stabilise the pound at the naive coaxing of Paris. If the French will not agree to co-operate in measures for stabilising world prices and in working out an international standard of currency, then we should challenge them directly with a new system based on sterling. There can be little doubt of the potency of such a system, supported as it would be immediately by the British Dominions and the Scandinavians, and very soon by other important trading countries which are now hanging precariously on to the gold standard. Will Mr. MacDonald have the courage to confront M. Laval with such a plan for restoring Germany, debamboozling America and saving France herself from the fate of the frog that tried to blow itself up into an ox?

TERRORISM AND REPRESSION

INDIA, it would seem, has started again upon the weary round of ordinances and outrages, *hartals* and *lathi* charges, no-rent campaigns, and evictions. It is clear to anyone who was in India this summer that the position has rapidly worsened since the National Government has taken office, but it is extremely difficult to gather, from the meagre and distorted news which filters back to England, how far these recent disturbances are the direct result of a change of policy in England and how far they can be ascribed to the efforts of the intransigent wing of the Congress Party. There are four disturbed areas, and in two of these, Bengal and the North-West Frontier, the Congress are not the direct instigators of the activities which have led to Government repression. The little group of middle-class Bengalis who are responsible for the murders in that Province can claim some measure of Congress sympathy, in spite of Mr. Gandhi's disclaimer, but having dedicated themselves to this work they are under no one's control. Similarly the Moslem Red Shirts under Abdul Ghaffar Khan have little more than a loose connection with the Congress. It is only in the United Provinces and to a far lesser extent in Bardoli that the Congress Party, under Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Patel, are directly leading an agrarian movement which is also definitely anti-Government.

It was not inevitable, therefore, that the new powers taken by Government, and the uses to which they have been put, should have been considered a direct challenge to the Congress, or should have been accepted as such by Mr. Gandhi and the other returning delegates. There was, in fact, considerable feeling amongst moderate Hindu leaders that some further Government action was necessary in Bengal and on the frontier, and even in the Congress there is some sympathy for the landlord's point of view. The Kashmir disturbances, and the communal riots at Chittagong had shown how easily the irresponsible attacks of young Hindus upon the Government may become converted into looting of *bazars* by Moslems, and the burning of shops and money-lenders' records. In all parts of India there are these cross-currents, due chiefly to awakening political interest in other classes besides the Hindu middle class. Perhaps the most striking example of this was the hostile reception accorded to Mr. Gandhi at Bombay by the depressed classes, which entirely upset the ordinary Congress arrangements for a *hartal* and an anti-Government demonstration. The interesting point about this was that the Mahars and others who took part in it were not, as at Nasik, merely asserting their claim to be treated as Hindus and as human beings, but were showing their disapproval of Mr. Gandhi's attitude during the Conference, when he resisted Dr. Ambedkar's demand for special representation. There is no question here of a deliberate policy of "divide and rule," these inter-sectional disputes are the inevitable result of introducing the idea of democracy into a country which is organised along caste and communal lines.

It is, therefore, very unfortunate that those outrages which have taken place, and the measures taken to repress them, should be bound up with such questions as the continuation of the "Delhi Pact" and the co-operation of the Congress leaders, like Pandit Malaviya, with the work of the Conference. It is difficult to avoid the impression that this is due to two sections, both of which disliked the Pact from the first and have no belief in the value of Congress participation in the Conference. One section is a group of officials in the Government of India, and the other section is the wing of the Congress led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Patels. The first has a very considerable voice in the drafting of Government orders and ordinances, and the second practically controls the whole of the Indian nationalist press, and this, with the exception of a few unimportant Moslem papers, and the newspapers which cater chiefly for Europeans, forms the only means by which those outside India can gauge Indian opinion.

The tragedy of the present situation is the absence of any solid body of Indians working actively for a settled and responsible Government. It is useless to blame the Hindu Liberals, or the more moderate elements in the Congress. The truth is that these men and women, even those who actually attended the Round Table Conference in London, are completely mystified over the future policy of the Government. Just as we have to judge the mentality of the Congress from the Indian press, so they have to gather the intentions of the Cabinet from the Prime Minister's vague speeches, from Sir Samuel Hoare's negative pronouncements, and from the extremely hostile attitude of the Conservative press. It is nonsense for Mr. MacDonald to state, as he did the other day, that "the Government has given more proof than any of its predecessors that by negotiation and consent it was preparing, in conjunction with the leaders of Indian opinion, to agree to a very large broadening of Indian freedom." The whole statement read in the light of the proceedings during the last fortnight of the Conference can only add to the general bewilderment and uncertainty. It would be interesting to know exactly what "proof" has been given by the present Government which was lacking during the term of office of Mr. MacDonald's previous Labour Government. The ordinary Indian politician has no idea whether the method of progress by negotiation is to continue or not. There was no negotiation about the Prime Minister's final statement, and none about the procedure to be adopted during the coming year. It was only with great difficulty that the Indian delegation, including the Princes, the Moslems,

and the Europeans were able to force the Chairman to let them express their unanimous disapproval of the line of policy which Sir Samuel Hoare had told some of them privately that he meant to adopt.

It would be the beginning of wisdom on the Indian question if the Prime Minister would understand that very few leading Indian politicians any longer trust his good intentions, and none believe that he is likely to be in a position to control his Cabinet for another year. That is why they are so keen on the machinery of negotiation being kept in working order. The appointment of three committees to report upon certain points is not enough to ensure their co-operation. They want to know that the Conference method is to continue, and that in the end the work of this Conference is not to be left to the mercy of the ignorant prejudices of Parliament. If Indians are to take part in building up a future constitution for their country, and are to incur the odium of arriving at compromises which many of their countrymen will dislike, they must have something more tangible to deal with than the Members of a House of Commons who are elected on issues which have no connection with India, and of whom not one in a hundred has any real knowledge of their country. From the Indian standpoint the questions at issue lie between their representatives and the British Cabinet, and they strongly object to the idea that when they have come to terms there should be other vague obstacles in the House of Commons, and even more absurdly in the House of Lords. How can Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru go before an Indian audience and stake his political reputation on the good faith of the British when he has not the faintest idea as to what particular British group is going to be in control next year? There are in India several hundred thousands of men and women who are our bitter and implacable enemies, and it is utterly useless to talk about them as a "mischievous movement," or to make their continued existence a reason for delaying any constructive work. The real question is whether we can build up a body of responsible Indian opinion in favour of a Federal Government, and we shall not do so until we can understand and meet the difficulties of those who would be prepared to help in this work.

G. T. GARRATT.

A LONDON DIARY

THE fact that a new Governor of the B.B.C. was to be appointed in the midst of the row about broadcasting policy naturally started a heap of speculation. Innumerable shots were made in the newspapers. Would he be another peer? Would he be another woman? Admittedly Lady Snowden has been the only Governor with any real energy and initiative. Would the new Governor be under seventy? Would he be a patron of the Arts? Would he be a puritanical sort of Governor, likely to out-Jix Sir John Reith? The secret is out. The new Governor is to be a certain Mr. Harold E. Brown. He is fifty-five years of age, a solicitor who has sat on many departmental committees and who has wide commercial and financial experience expected to be useful to the B.B.C. I have no reason to doubt that Mr. Brown is the worthiest of solicitors. But did we want a worthy solicitor? I wanted a public man of known personality and wide outlook. We may yet find men of this calibre on the Board. For the Government has done one really good thing. It has only reappointed the remaining existing Governors—Lord Gainford, Lady Snowden, and Dr. Montague Rendall—for a further period of one year. So there is time really to thrash out the problem of B.B.C. policy and see that one or two first-class people are appointed to the Board this time next year.

I listened (by accident) to Mr. Michael Sadleir's last wireless talk on novels, the last talk in which Sir John Reith is going to allow the morals of the country to be perverted by the mention of the title of a novel. It was an amusing talk, for Mr. Sadleir succeeded, without a word of comment, in making the Director ridiculous by simply giving us a list of the novels which he had recommended to his listeners during the last year. Not one of them could possibly have brought a blush to the cheek of the Director, his maiden aunt, or his little child. The most "advanced," technically and morally, seemed to be Mr. Hugh Walpole's *Judith Paris*. Surely not even Sir John Reith or Mr. Alfred Noyes can imagine that Mr. Walpole is "modern." It seemed to me, however, from the official statement of the B.B.C. on the "new policy" that there were signs of a wobble towards common sense and even an attempt to wriggle out of the preposterous position originally adopted. Talks on novels are only "suspended." It would, however, be a pity if this question of novels were allowed to obscure the larger fact that the whole policy of those at the head of the B.B.C. has lately been steadily deteriorating and has led to a deterioration in programmes. This is noticeable in music. Here patriotism is to do for music what the Director's personal views on morality are to do for literature. The programmes are now full of feeble English music badly sung or played by Englishmen and Englishwomen. Anything better calculated to make one ashamed of being an Englishman I cannot imagine.

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Public suggestibility, and the resources of modern showmanship, are both well exemplified by the publicity given to the "Bridge Marathon" now raging in New York. Mr. Culbertson and Mr. Lenz, and their respective partners, took their seats in a room at the Hotel Chatham about three weeks ago to begin this epoch-making contest of 150 rubbers. The proceedings are regulated by a legal agreement of 17 clauses; an army of officials watches and checks up the play (under the direction of a West Point officer "in full uniform"); a battery of photographers is always available in an ante-chamber; and six telegraphists tap out the scores to every part of the globe. From the point of view of serious bridge—good players as the participants are—this contest is, of course, all "ballyhoo"; no one knows that better than its promoters; but what is at stake is not the few thousand dollars wagered in the match, but the domination of the American market for books on contract and organised instruction in the game. The last laugh is with Messrs. Culbertson and Lenz, who, for a modest outlay, have obtained in the world's press millions of dollar's worth of free publicity.

* * *

Although they were defeated by England the Spanish footballers returned to their country with a very thorough victory over the Irish Free State to their credit. Ireland has, however, always made far more of Rugger than of Soccer and I wonder if we shall ever see a Spanish Rugger team at Lansdowne Road. "May I be there to see," for I shall never forget what was, I think, the first Rugger match ever played in Spain. It was in 1925. The sun was strong and the ground was like earthenware. The great crowd which assembled at the stadium in Madrid had apparently no idea that they were to see a new kind of "futbol." Their worried surprise at seeing fifteen men file on to the field became indignant protest at the sight of the oval ball; and when after the kick-off a man took the ball in his hands and ran off with it, there was a shout of incredulous dismay. The whole crowd stood up shouting and protesting in wonder. Violent arguments, disputes and explanations broke out everywhere and these became a roar of laughter when the first scrum took place. The game was chiefly scrum, and I have never seen a referee so harassed, nor a crowd so overcome with consternation and

helpless laughter *outside* the theatre. All went incoherently until the beginning of the second half when, as it seemed to me, both sides made a concerted dash upon the ball and lay upon it in a heap. When they were removed it was found that the ball had burst. By this time the crowd was hysterical. Worse followed, for when the referee sent to the pavilion for the second ball it had been stolen—no doubt as a trophy!—and the game had to end. The sides were drawn from a military academy and had a stiffening of English youths who, bleeding and torn, said that they hoped humanitarian sentiment would persuade the Spaniards to stick to bull-fighting and leave Rugger alone. They played like tigers. I believe the hope was fulfilled. At any rate, one does not hear anything now of Rugger in Spain.

* * *

I often still hear my middle-class friends bewailing their "servant troubles" and I have been told terrible tales in the country of young women who were "on the dole," while hundreds of people were in need of domestic servants. I have just heard a very different story from a domestic servant who has been trying to get a situation as cook in London this last six weeks. According to her the demand is so small and the supply so large that one of the best-known agencies refuses to take any more applicants on their books. When she goes off to answer an advertisement in a paper, however early she goes, she finds that there have been five or six applicants for the job before her.

* * *

There is an odd conflict of slogans in the shops to-day:

"Spend less,"
"Buy British,"
"Eat more fruit."

I try to make my actions suit.
But what's to do, when Gilmour comes
And plonks a tuppenny tax on plums?

CRITIC.

NEW YEAR GREETING

(*From one Member of the Licensing Commission to another, on the eve of the Report.*)

DRINK to me only with thine i's, and I will cross the t's,
But leave no kiss within this cup of crabb'd officialese;
The thirst that from the soul doth rise doth ask a drink divine,
And nothing you or I can write is relevant to mine.

H. P.

IS IT A BOY?

IF an event can occur in one of two ways with equal chances it is a simple matter to get a reputation as a prophet by guessing results. If you are right, as you probably will be fifty per cent. of times, you strengthen your claim to superior powers, and if you are wrong a little ingenuity will explain away your failures. Kaffir witch-doctors, gipsy fortune-tellers, tipsters, and people who have a system for controlling the sex of the coming babe get praise and pelf on this principle. To be entirely successful you rationalise your guesses. Thus the sex prophets usually have a complete pseudo-scientific or ortho-magical explanation of the manner in which their results are achieved. The lady who, a few years ago, claimed that many mothers of much-desired sons or long-wished-for daughters had been made happy by following her instructions and had testified joyfully to their efficacy did not need the additional recommendation of a Member of Parliament in the Conservative interest, her own husband, to justify her claims to success—at least in half the total number of cases. Of the failures one heard nothing.

The successes were explained by the following theory: the human ovaries, as everybody knows, are paired organs. The right ovary, so the theory runs, produces ova which give rise to one sex only and the left to the other. It is supposed that they function alternately. All that is required to control the sex of your offspring is a formula for determining which functions when, a judicious choice of times, and prompt action when it is desirable for conception to take place.

If it were not that the ovaries do not necessarily function alternately; that a single ovary, where the other has been damaged, will produce ova developing into either sex; that the sex is not determined until the ovum is fertilised—if it were not that experimental physiology does not confirm it in any respect, this theory might be a very good one. In the natural order of things, in fact, it is purely a matter of chance whether your child is a boy or a girl, and since there are only two sexes, the chances are even that it will be either. Hence the sex ratio in any population remains roughly constant, 100 males to approximately 100 females. The slight preponderance of females in some populations is due to their greater tenacity of life.

The mechanism of sex differentiation is an interesting one. It has been known to us, through the work of a number of investigators, only since the Mendelian renaissance in the first decade of the twentieth century. Its material source lies in those microscopic bodies found in the cell nuclei, called chromosomes, which are the physical bases of inheritance. From both father and mother indifferently we derive our inheritance, mental and physical, but it is by the father's contribution that our sex is determined. If we examine microscopically the individual chromosomes of an animal, we find that their number is constant for any species and that they can be arranged in pairs according to shape and size. In the female (except in the case of birds, butterflies, and moths) the pairing is perfect, but in the male there is one unmatched couple. Biologists call the unmatched chromosomes of the male the XY pair, and the corresponding matched pair in the female the XX pair. In the ordinary growth processes the cells divide, two perfect cells being formed from one by the division. The full complement of chromosomes is made up by a longitudinal splitting of each into two. But in the division of the germ or reproductive cells there is a stage at which no splitting of the chromosomes takes place. Instead, the pairs separate, one member of each pair going into each of the two new cells formed by the division. Consequently the germ cells, both male and female, contain half the usual number of chromosomes, a single set instead of a double set.

The twenty-four *pairs* of chromosomes in the cell nucleus of the human being become twenty-four *only* in the germ cells. The XX pair in the female is thus divided between two cells, each of which obtains an X chromosome, but the XY pair in the male is divided between two cells, one of which obtains an X chromosome and one a Y chromosome. In short, whilst all the ova will be X-bearing, the sperms will be of two sorts, half X-bearing and half Y-bearing. When the union of the two nuclei takes place, following fertilisation, there is a reconstitution of the original number of forty-eight chromosomes, twenty-four being contributed by each parent cell. The forty-eight chromosomes in the now fertilised egg cell may be constituted in two ways. If the fertilising sperm cell is X-bearing, the ovum, since it is itself X-bearing, proceeds on its embryological development as an XX individual, and in due course a baby girl will be born; but if the ovum is fertilised by a Y-bearing sperm the resulting combination will have the XY or unmatched chromosomes, and when the process of development is complete the parents will rejoice in the birth of a man child.

Of the two hundred million or so sperms that may fertilise the single egg, half are of each kind; and accident determines the selection of the single sperm that will contribute its substance to a new individual. We have no control over that selection, and so we continue to produce males and females indiscriminately and, in the long run, in equal numbers. If it were possible to separate the two kinds of sperm we might, by artificial insemination, produce boys or girls at will. It sounds startling, for it is evident from on inspection of the means by which the sex ratio is maintained that no sort of quackbosh system based on times and seasons can have any effect on the natural incidence of sex in a population. But there are indications that the application of the fruits of scientific discovery may in the indefinite future give us this power.

Working on a certain plant-bug in 1913, Faust measured the size, by a micrometric method, of the mature germ cells of the male and discovered that they fell into two size groups. Later investigators showed that this curious dual mode in the size of the male germ cells was not peculiar to *Anasa tristis*, the animal on which Faust had worked. It was to be found in mammals, the ram, the bull, and the dog; and Parkes showed, in 1923, that Man also displayed this feature of size dimorphism in the male germ cells. It was absent in moths. This was a very significant fact, for moths do not carry the unmatched (XY) chromosomes; their sperms are all of one kind, the Y chromosome being only in the female germ cell. It seems as though the distribution of the two sizes in the male germ cells might correspond to the distribution of X and Y chromosomes. This has not as yet been decided with certainty, but it is now considered highly probable. If there is a distinct difference in size and weight between the X-bearing and the Y-bearing germ cells it should be possible to separate them, either by means of a centrifuging apparatus or by allowing them to settle in a suitable medium. Some work has actually been performed in this direction. The difficulties which the operation presents are not expected to be insurmountable.

Once the separation of the two kinds of cells has been effected, under proper conditions of temperature and in a medium of suitable saline and alkaline content, the transfer of those of the desired kind might be made with comparatively little difficulty. As far back as the eighteenth century the Abbé Spallanzani performed the operation of artificial insemination. To-day it is frequently used by animal breeders and laboratory workers. It has been performed successfully on human beings and is occasionally carried out by medical men in certain cases. What use humanity will make of this power to decide the sex of its offspring is problematical. It is possible that it will not be privately exploited. If Mr. Bertrand Russell's prophecy comes true, and a European population, decimated by war, and governed by "politically minded scientists and scientifically minded politicians" elects to sterilise seventy-five per cent. of its men and women and to exercise a rigid control over the reproductive activities of the remainder, the sex ratio will be one of the most important matters concerning which the Government will have to lay down a policy. Sterilisation could be used only to restrict the size of the population, but to expand it, sex control might be employed by increasing the number of females and subsequently the size of the population of both sexes. On the other hand, the same contrivance might be used for creating a population consisting mostly of males to satisfy the demands of a military State or to supply male labour for a great industrial organisation. In a eugenically controlled State it could be a valuable aid to the rapid elimination by selection of an unwanted sex-linked character or the propagation of a desirable one. But the choice of the favoured character would depend on the taste of the Government. Human faith in monarchical government is not likely to survive, but, if it should, the machinery is here for insuring male succession. On the whole, it looks as though public interference with the sex ratio is not likely to bring much happiness to mankind, but if the getting of a family remains a private concern, which is not very probable, it will at any rate be a great comfort to many good couples to know that they may have a son or a daughter, according to inclination.

LOUIS HERRMAN.

MR. LENZ'S YELL

PEOPLE who quarrel become detestably interesting. I I was already following with considerable curiosity the serial game of bridge which has made the name of Culbertson famous wherever English is spoken, and probably further; but the game did not seem to me to reach the level of great drama till Mr. Lenz yelled across the table at Mr. Jacoby: "What's the idea of making such rotten psychic bids? You're having lots of fun aren't you? Why not give me a break? I don't even know what you've got in your hand," and Mr. Jacoby, in his own words, "blew up." I trust that every slightest detail of the quarrel—every syllable of temper, every facial contortion of the angry partners—has been preserved and set down by some American historian, since every account I have read increases my appetite for more. I should like to see a cinematograph record of Mr. Lenz's glare when Mr. Jacoby bid "two no-trumps" in a game in which their opponents ultimately made five no-trumps with the greatest ease. We are told that "during recent days it has been obvious that Mr. Lenz's nerves were beginning to be frayed by constant reverses," and, though I am no sadist, I long to be able to follow each particular wriggle of irascibility in Mr. Lenz's nervous system till the moment of the great yell. Henry James could not have told the story at too great length for me. And, though Mr. Jacoby was rather disappointing in that he did not yell in return, but was merely "speechless with annoyance," he at least entered into the spirit of the dramatic occasion by a kind of speechlessness that made it difficult for the officials to persuade him to play out the last rubber, and by afterwards stamping out of the card-room, "furious with indignation," and resigning from the contest.

My own sympathies in the matter are chiefly with Mr. Lenz. I have seldom played bridge, but, when I did, I frequently made "psychic bids" after the manner of Mr. Jacoby, and in the event knew that I had been justly glared at by my partner. Mr. Jacoby appears to believe that by making "psychic bids" he is modernising the game of bridge, but bids of this kind have always been made in every nursery that contains a pack of cards. I have seldom experienced greater torment during an hour of recreation than when playing bridge with a partner whose bids were even more psychic than my own. In such circumstances one does one's best to smile, but the smile is the ghastly smile of a murderer. Beneath the surface tension grows acute. Frayed nerves send messages of hate to the tips of the lips, to the tips of the fingers, to the tips of the toes. One longs to yell like Mr. Lenz, "Why do you make those rotten bids?" But one does not. One does not even throw the cards into the fire. One simply glares and smiles.

It is difficult to say whether it is the best thing for one's soul to repress the emotions in this way. A pack of cards thrown in a partner's face, even a surreptitious kick on his ankle, by relieving one's feelings would reduce one's hatred, and so ought to make for a return of right feeling. And yet somehow one cannot enjoy a scene in which one is oneself a leading figure. One cannot even enjoy a scene, as a rule, in which one's friends are leading figures. Scenes are good to read about, as murders and shipwrecks are, but the secret of the wise life is to let other people perpetrate them. Hence the iron rules that govern the behaviour of the players

of all games. For the sake of the players themselves rigid prohibitions against quarrelling and bad language have to be enforced. So natural is quarrelling to a human being that it is the easiest thing in the world for a man to lose his self-command even at a game of Happy Families. Suppose one of the players illegitimately withholds Miss Chipe, the Carpenter's Daughter, and that for lack of this comely card one fails to win the game. Is not a little furious indignation justified? Is there any epithet in the English language too severe to put the occasion in a nutshell? I am not sure that even a slap would be morally indefensible. A yell would certainly be a modest expression of one's feelings. Yet one knows that it will not do. If one begins slapping and blaspheming at Happy Families, card games will soon degenerate into unseemly wrangles, and one might as well leave the cards in their cases and wrangle without them.

Apart from this, if quarrelling at games were permitted without limit, there are many games at which it would be positively dangerous. If a chess champion, exasperated by his opponent's slow play—and what could be more exasperating to ordinary human nature?—took up his king and hurled it into his opponent's face, he might conceivably knock an eye out. We often think of croquet as a harmless and mild game, but I have heard of a croquet player chasing an opponent accused of cheating round the lawn with a mallet. Passion is a stranger no more to the golf-course than to the croquet lawn, and who could contemplate with equanimity revised rules which would permit the golfer to bring his niblick down on the skull of an opponent who had lied himself into winning the decisive hole? Similarly, in the idyllic game called village cricket, the batsman cannot safely be allowed to pull up a stump and threaten the umpire with it because he has been given "out." This thing has happened, but it was nipped in the bud, and the cricketer nowadays has to get rid of his emotions by, at most, taking a whack at the empty air with his bat.

These are comparatively gentle games—games in which body does not deliberately clash with body or tussle with it. Yet even here we realise how necessary it is that the right to make scenes shall be restricted. What, then, of the more violent games such as football and boxing? Looking at a game of Rugby football, a stranger might be forgiven for thinking that here at last surely is a game in which the players are allowed to molest, bruise and injure each other just as they please. Even the applauders of a good game of Rugby frequently speak of it as "a game in which quarter was neither asked nor given," as though no higher praise were possible. Yet, although you are allowed almost to throttle an opponent while he has the ball, you are not allowed to go on throttling him when he has parted with it, however great the injuries he may have inflicted on you. You may fling him to the ground, hurl him into touch, smother him and perpetrate all manner of brutality on him, if you choose the right moment, but if you lay even a little finger on him at the wrong moment you will find yourself penalised, and even, perhaps, ordered off the field. So slight an offence—considering the broad-minded standards of modern life—as using foul language to the referee is treated as a crime. Even to raise one's foot from the ground is in certain cases punished as a grave misdemeanour and may result in the loss of the game. Boxing is a sport that is protected even more rigorously against scenes. The spectators may make scenes—and, luckily for the reading public, they sometimes do—but the boxers themselves may not. They may beat each other black and blue, dotting islands of blood all over their bare chests, and that is not called a "scene." But if one of them, angered by a decision, taps the referee the lightest blow on the cheek, as a boxer did the other evening, that is a "scene," and the whole world hears of it. We disapprove and are deeply interested. If the blow had been harder we should have been more disapproving and still more deeply interested.

As for bridge, it is so essentially a non-violent game that a player's yell here counts for as much as a blow in sterner pastimes. Spiritually it is an expression of the same deep-seated emotions—the cry of a tortured spirit in defeat believed to be unmerited. If I were a poet I should write a pathetic ballad based on that anguished yell, "Why did you make those rotten bids?" that has reached us across the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. Lenz's yell expresses what we all have in some circumstances or other felt. He has dramatised the frayed nerves of mankind. What a yell! What a scene! I wish I could get a fuller account of it. Y.Y.

NEW YEARS AND OLD TROUBLES

NINETEEN-THIRTY-ONE goes past
With its tale of sheer disaster—
Unemployment rising faster,
India's sky still overcast;
Foreign trade by tariffs strangled,
Reparations worse entangled,
Nation arming against nation,
Sterling's sad depreciation—
Bitter fruit, of which, indeed,
With its "errors and omissions,"
Furtive fears and blind suspicions,
Selfish hoarding, reckless spending,
Impotent debates unending,
Strife of State, and class, and faction,
Lazy thought, and thoughtless action,
Nineteen-thirty sowed the seed!

In comes Nineteen-thirty-two—
Incomes halved and doubled taxes,
Falling stocks, and whetted axes
Lie in wait for me and you;
Commerce shrinking, Empires quaking,
Banks upon the point of breaking—
Bills that Thirty-one presented
For our policies demented.
May, perhaps, the moral be
That no plan (though Young's or Dawes's)
Can deny effects to causes;
That we *might* reach calmer weather
If the nations pulled together,
Taking longer views, as knowing
That the fruits of this year's sowing
Will be reaped in Thirty-three?

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

THE EXPORT OF ARMS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your issue of December 19th you observe that this country, in common with other signatories of the Kellogg Pact and the League Covenant, is continuing to export armaments to "belligerent countries," and you add that "the hesitation of the League of Nations Union to press the Government—which ought to need no pressing—on this subject, seems inexplicable on any reputable ground."

I understand that the export of arms from this country to China and Japan in October and November was small in itself and did not exceed the normal export in times of profound peace. It included, for example, some sample bombs for Japan and two second-hand machine guns for China. Moreover (strange as it may seem to the lay man), it appears that, in the view of the British Government and other States members of the League's Council, China and Japan are not "belligerent countries"; and that, therefore, the means provided in Article 16 of the Covenant for exercising pressure upon a nation which "resorts

to war" in disregard of its covenants are not applicable in this case.

However much we may regret the second-hand machine-guns and the sample bombs, the League of Nations Union is surely right to concentrate its efforts on the main issue, which appears to be this: are we content for it to remain possible to break the Covenant in the spirit and yet to fulfil it in the letter; and, if not, what must be done, perhaps to make the spirit correspond with the letter of the Covenant, but certainly to create for the League's support, both in letter and spirit, a better educated and better organised public opinion? We must not strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.—Yours, etc.,

League of Nations Union, MAXWELL GARNETT.
15 Grosvenor Crescent, London, S.W.1.

[The size of our armament exports is quite irrelevant. What we ask for is a statement by the Government that it will not give licences for the export of any arms to a belligerent country. And everyone knows that China and Japan are fighting. The League Council's effort to cover itself by declaring that the war is not a war is just an example of the kind of dishonest conduct which is destroying the League. Is a war only a war when recognised as such by the League? This is indeed to strain at a legal gnat in the desperate hope that no one will notice that one is swallowing an actual camel.—ED. *N. S. & N.*]

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Thank you for your pluck in suggesting in your issue of Dec. 19 that Great Britain should be a pioneer in the refusal to export armaments to countries which are at war. This is indeed "coming down to brass tacks" at last.

But if your statement is true, that such export cannot go on without the knowledge of the British Government, and even its sanction, and if even two Labour Governments gave such sanction, how can we hope that any Government will have the courage to meddle with these strong vested interests? Would not the next best thing be to demand that full publicity, including the name of the exporting firm, should be required in every case where the Government gives a licence for the export of armaments out of the country?—Yours, etc.,

29 Frederick Road, PRISCILLA ALBRIGHT.
Edgbaston, Birmingham.

BASLE, BERLIN, AND WASHINGTON

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your article on "Basle, Berlin and Washington" says we cannot pay the United States, and that responsible Americans do not expect us to be able to pay. This suggests that we are in the disgraceful position of an individual debtor, once rich, who through extravagance or recklessness is unable to pay his creditors. I submit that the analogy is quite misleading. A comparison with individuals is afforded by the case of *A*, a wealthy man who, to save the life of a friend, yields to the demand of a famous surgeon that he should undertake to supply the surgeon regularly in future years with a specified amount of radium. The surgeon does not want a general command of goods and services (which, since the two persons are in the same country, would be afforded by money payments); he wants radium, and nothing else. Thinking that he will always be able to buy enough radium to supply the surgeon, *A* consents. In the course of years he finds it more and more difficult to obtain radium, owing to the supply being bought up by others, including the surgeon himself. Finally he is obliged to confess himself unable to get it. He offers the surgeon money—command of goods and services. The surgeon says he does not want command of goods and services; *A* has promised him radium, and he wants radium; if *A* cannot pay him in radium, he is a defaulter, an insolvent debtor, etc. Being a high-minded and generous man, he will give *A* time to make the next payment, but in no circumstances will he consent to reduce his just claim by one grain of radium. Shall we tell the surgeon that *A* cannot pay, and that he knows this quite well? Is that the way to defend *A*? Should we not rather tell him that, as he and others have bought up all the radium, he must be content with a general command of goods and services—a money payment?

Money is a means of payment only between persons in the same country. People in different countries do, indeed, make what seem to be money payments to each other, but that is only because their Governments undertake to implement the so-called payments (which are really only promises) with goods. One country cannot pay another except in goods, including gold. If gold is not available, payment can only be made in other goods.

It is not true to say that we cannot pay. We can pay without difficulty in the only means of international payment—goods. What we cannot do is to carry out our rash promise, extorted from us when we were in dire need of certain goods, to deliver gold. Let us hear no more of this inability to pay.

But your article does not meet—and it ought to be met—one suggestion which comes from the United States: that our museums and galleries are full of treasures, which the United States Government might accept in place of gold. Just so, the surgeon might demand that *A* should hand over to him, in place of radium, his old masters and other priceless possessions; or, as in the ancient story of the Greedy Brahman and his children. But no court of law would uphold a claim for particular things chosen by the creditor, failing the thing agreed upon. All that *A* could be compelled to supply in place of radium would be a general command of goods and services—money. As there is no international money giving such a command, the reasonable means of settling a debt to the United States is a delivery of goods, chosen by agreement between the two Governments or by arbitration. If the United States Government says it would rather cancel the debt, let it be cancelled, but do not let it be said that we are unable to pay.—Yours, etc.,

R. GRANT BROWN.

2B Belsize Lane, N.W.3.

CYPRUS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I be permitted to point out certain facts of the Cyprus question, which, as far as I know, have not yet received the required emphasis?

It has been often stated by native members in the Legislative Council of Cyprus that the expensive and complicated machinery of administration obliged the government to depend to a great extent for revenue on indirect taxation. Eight-tenths of the revenue is derived from custom and excise duties which lie heavily on commodities of absolute necessity.

Again, by official estimates, the national income which was £3,500,000 in 1928, has decreased to-day to £2,700,000, thus reducing the average social income from approximately £10 to £7 7s. per person; and if we take into consideration that the revenue is £830,000 and is derived from 370,000 people, it means that out of an income of £7 7s., £2 5s. is tax, thus leaving the net social income at £5 5s. We have to consider, too, that as the agricultural population has to pay interest on loans, which cannot be recorded in official statistics, the social income at any given time is less than the above estimate.

Let me make it clear, however, that by this I do not mean that the rising of Cyprus was due to economic discontent, though the economic conditions have influenced a section of the population, nor, as it has been alleged, by the leadership of men who had material interests in such a revolt, but to the indestructible will of the people to see themselves united to Greece.

I am unable in a short letter to stress this point significantly enough, for, though the people of this country are ardent believers in civil liberty, they have never been faced with a problem of national freedom. But, nevertheless, any of those who in these critical times have given a moment's thought to the demand of Cyprus must have admitted to themselves that for 300,000 people to want something more sincerely than life itself must be worthy of some consideration.—Yours, etc.,

27 Eccleston Square, P. S. MESSINESI.
S.W.1.

THE B.B.C.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—What can be done about this B.B.C. ban on modern criticism? I have suggested to a few friends that we shall not renew our licences in January, while at the same time using our wireless and risking fines. But my friends seem to be more honourable than myself. However, something must be done. The authorities may say that we can read these critics in the better newspapers. That is true, fortunately, but at the same

time have the B.B.C. considered what a boon it is to the thousand and one obscure people with growing minds to come into a kind of personal contact with these distinguished men and women? To listen to Desmond MacCarthy, for instance, for half an hour is worth a ream of columns. These are the people that we of the thousand and one sort want to hear. It is to be hoped that they are all in a position to refuse compromise.

As for respecting "conventional morality," if we are to be surfeited with chatter from types like the gentleman you mention, many of us will think that the prefix "im" is missing.—Yours, etc.,

22 Cathcart Road, London, S.W.10. December 13th. ELEANOR GLIDEWELL.

THE LAW AND SEX

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The lag of the law behind public opinion is one of the difficulties of social workers, and it is useful to have attention drawn towards it as in Mr. Justice McCardie's recent pronouncement at the Leeds Assizes. There is no doubt that our criminal law, not only in cases of abortion, but of other offences against morality, needs revision; though we may not all agree with Mr. Justice McCardie as to the form revision should take.

One point, however, the learned Judge overlooked: a point of sinister significance and one that must be made clear. He states that there are 300,000 mentally deficient women in this country and that, apart from a small proportion in institutions, "they are breeding freely day by day in every city and every county." What he does not mention is that over against these 300,000 feeble-minded women are 300,000 men who have consorted with them willingly and of their own choice and have started within them the lives Mr. McCardie so rightly and bitterly deplores. A certain proportion are their husbands; even so the responsibility still rests. A small number are likewise feeble-minded and for the safety of the public require institutional care or, failing this, surgical treatment. But what is of grave import is that by far the larger number of these 300,000 men are just the ill-developed products of our civilisation. This is the grave and festering sore in the community, a challenge to all who would save the race. Not only are feeble-minded women day by day adding to the population, but year by year we are allowing thousands of our young men to pass out from school and home into the world with little or no sex education, no appreciation of the tremendous responsibility attached to the exercise of their special powers. The darker tones in the Judge's picture support this contention. Also it is not without significance that twice within the last week have I been told on good authority that soliciting by men, in one instance in a great city, in the other in a medium-sized town, is now more prevalent than soliciting by women.

These facts must be faced before we can deal truly with the problems Mr. Justice McCardie describes.—Yours, etc.,

E. D. HUTCHINSON.

Cambridge. December 15th.

THE TRACTOR

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As one of the many farmers deeply interested in S. L. B.'s contributions to your pages, may I call his attention to one factor militating against the more extended use of the tractor in this district certainly, if not in others? Paraffin consumed by one Fordson tractor during the past farming year ended Martinmas here, came to approximately £50. This is delivered at the farmsteading in bulk by the wholesaler, but the bill is presented by the local general merchant in the village, who neither sees nor knows himself what is delivered. The price charged is the same for 50 gallons as for one pint.

Crude oil can be purchased by the ton at wholesale rates, but my efforts to get any reasonable trade discount for paraffin have been fruitless. If S. L. B. can help us he will have done a genuine service. We are threatened with a further rise in oil, another argument against an order for a second tractor which I should like to place. The objection to most co-operative societies where they exist is that they are too small to be effective on the purchasing side, where they would be of most benefit. The farmer, of course. is the only tradesman who sells in the wholesale market and buys in the retail one. If bulk orders for manures, implements, and feeding stuff could be placed in the hands of a central buying agency in London and Glasgow we should see astonishing economies. A so-called central co-operative society which enjoys a Government subsidy exists or did exist in Edinburgh, but when I first heard of them and sent some orders I was told that they did not exist for such practical purposes, but functioned in an advisory capacity only! I can visualise a central organisation requiring a minimum of staff and housing, removed from local jealousies, and dealing for cash only, which would revolutionise our costs. Such an organisation is in existence for the poultry industry in the shape of the S.P.B.A. which, starting from the humblest beginnings, has grown to its present dimensions.—Yours, etc.,

Southwick House, By Dumfries. R. G. D. THOMAS.

THE ENGLISH FARMER

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—S. L. B. is to be congratulated on striking several nails that needed hitting. His strictures on wages, loyalty, and choice of leaders are highly necessary and right. As regards leaders, farmers are very prone to elect anyone a little outside the regular tenant farmer, consequently both the English and Scotch Farmers Unions' are influenced and dominated to a great extent by occupying owners, and landowners whose main interests are outside farming and who are merely farming for a hobby. Consequently in the present outcry for tariffs, protection, subsidy and Government money in any shape or form, the fundamental necessity of land tenure reform is being ignored. For instance, how can any tenant farmer adopt many of the proved beneficial changes and methods advocated without sinking capital in the land? Even the small affair of filling ditches and levelling off and realigning fields suggested by S. L. B. can only be done by a tenant at risk of increased rent, etc. Until the tenant has complete security of tenure, subject to using the land properly, little advance in these things can be looked for. Further, so long as land is realising its present prices and rents there seems absolutely no case for financial aid in any shape or form, as it is abundantly clear that it will only result in further inflation of land values to the detriment of the tenant. It is also not evident where the consumer and taxpayer are to find the money for these subsidies, etc. It is idle to talk of what farmers should do. They are cribbed and bound by leases and insecurity of tenure, and there are few cases indeed where the improving tenant has ever escaped confiscation of a great portion of his improvements or has avoided increased rent or eviction in the long run.

Nothing is more remarkable than the enormous changes for the better, and the great improvements made, in the case of many occupying owners who have managed to buy their farms at fairly reasonable prices as compared with the still greater number who were compelled to pay wildly monopolistic prices in the post-war boom and who have little capital to spare. Even with these, one sees improvements made which the old owners never would have done. Whatever may be said of other things, conditions of tenure are fundamental, and to ignore them is to get nowhere.—Yours, etc.,

Blythe, Lauder, Berwickshire. December 20th. ARTHUR R. MCDOUGAL.

MILK

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your interesting article on "Milk," A. B. deplored the fact that so many cows are tuberculous, one million out of a total six million. She quoted Professor Buxton as stating that in order to eradicate tuberculosis in cattle "no less than half the breeding and commercial cows in the country would have to be slaughtered." The ray of hope is that the death-rate from tuberculosis is rapidly falling in this country; but the reasons are to be sought in the healthier way of living of the population, and other causes. Might not this healthier way of living be offered to our millions or even to the six million cows?

Those who know how cows are kept, often in great filth, are only surprised that more do not succumb at an earlier stage. Horses are generally groomed, but cows not so often. Some farmers are beginning to believe in keeping them all the year round in the open with a shed for shelter in bad weather. But

too many are kept tethered in dark, dirty old stalls. The remedy lies with our local District and County Councils. In a report before me it is stated that "many cowsheds are in a foul condition and that clean milk could not be produced when obtained from animals so housed." It is not to be wondered at that city distributors of milk think it wise to pasteurise all they sell and so protect their customers, and especially their customers' children. In one county area, Monmouth, Dr. D. Rocyn Jones, the County Medical Officer, has for some years past carried out a system of inspecting the milk supply for bacteria, and other signs of dirt. He collects samples through the County Sanitary Inspector accompanied by the District Sanitary Inspector, and they are examined by the County Bacteriologist. Where evidence points to dirt contamination a warning is sent to the offender by the Clerk to the local Sanitary authority. In practically every case this has had the effect of an immediate improvement in the condition of the milk.

It is true that to improve cowsheds costs money, but so it does to slaughter cows, and still more to maintain tuberculous patients for several years in sanatoria or in their homes. We are gradually carrying a crusade into our slums and pulling down or rebuilding poor old cottages in the country, but we do need to protect ourselves from this danger of old and dirty cowsheds, even at some cost in the production of this most valuable food, milk.—Yours, etc.,

Woodhurst, Norwich. HUBERT A. DAY.

THE FOREIGN MUSICIAN

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Turner has suddenly become a trailer of herrings. Of course, British scientists do not exclude their Continental colleagues, nor do literary men of any nation quail when the sales of a foreigner mount up. British scientists are protected from unemployment arising out of foreign competition in a hundred ways—language barriers and the knowledge that the home-produced scientist is as good as the foreign article. Literary men do not suffer when their works are sold abroad, or foreign works sold here; the native and foreign authors draw increased royalties. If not, they are protected by copyright agreements, and the Law moves to their help. We are not an inhospitable nation—indeed, we can give our neighbours points in this detail. Any foreigner may hold a post in a British State school, or in one of our universities, but no foreigner may hold a chair in a French or German university. The reputation of literary men and scientists rests largely upon merit, upon public expert knowledge, and not, as in the case of the musician, upon the judgment of critics, the power of the press and the promoter of celebrity concerts. I hope we shall continue to invite the really great foreign musicians, and I hope we shall soon be rid of the foreign mediocrity.

Oxford will continue to invite the Einsteins, and Cambridge the Freuds, but if the time ever comes when all the university chairs in the country are held by foreigners, then even the Royal Society may have something to say.

It is not the British musician who suffers from the inferiority complex. He *knows*, often only too well, that many a so-called international celebrity is a very shoddy artist indeed. But the public does *not* know, nor does the musical critic, whose function it is to raise the level of public knowledge, do much to help. More power to the British Musicians' Institute. I hope it will succeed in weeding out the foreign mediocrity. It is only doing what the Medical Council, the Authors' Society, the Association of University Teachers, even the Royal Society would do in like circumstances—protecting the interests of its members.—Yours, etc.,

A. LLOYD JAMES.

6 Meadway, N.W.11.

DE QUINCEY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am doing research work on the life of Thomas De Quincey, and I wonder if any of your readers can inform me of the whereabouts of the various letters by, or to, De Quincey.

It is almost impossible to trace these letters, as so many of them are in private collections. I should take the utmost care with any that I were permitted to examine.—Yours, etc.,

18 Torrington Square, London, W.C.1. MILTON GREENBLATT.

ITALIAN DEPORTEES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—No, I do not think Sig. Camagna has earned his statue yet. The exquisite dish of fish would require oil to fry it in, and fire to cook it on, which would leave little of the five lire for anything else. As I mentioned before, the boots require resoling, and a coat is advisable in winter when the incessant violent winds of those isles become bitter—winds which render it an uncomfortable residence in spite of the contrary opinion, in eight volumes, of the Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Tuscany—not Austria—(*The Encyclopædia Britannica's* mistake), second son of Leopold II of Tuscany.

I mentioned Lipari as the site of the monument because it is the biggest and best of the islands of deportation. Next is Ponza. Ustica, Lampedusa, Pantelleria, Favignana are best described as arid, if picturesque, volcanic rocks.—Yours, etc.,

Switzerland. AN ITALIAN.

December 20th.

A COMPOSITE ART

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The "really amusing story" which Mr. Gordon Craig quotes from *The Costume of the Theatre* is to be found in the works of Guy de Maupassant. Whether "the owner of the yacht" borrowed it from Maupassant or *vice-versa* is an interesting question which the author of *Costume* might be able to solve.—Yours, etc.,

E. E. KELLETT.

Miscellany

A TRUE AMATEUR OF MUSIC

THE death, after a short illness, of Mrs. Samuel Courtauld deprives London of one of the greatest of its musical benefactors. Mrs. Courtauld was a true amateur, and did not cultivate music because it was fashionable. Her passion for music being genuine, she did not take it up one year to drop it the next year for something new, as is the manner of most people of leisure who are merely seeking novelty and distraction and wish to be in the fashion. Being a woman of great energy and considerable practical ability, she would have hated to make a muddle or a half-success of anything, and it is a remarkable testimony to her capacity that when she undertook the chief responsibility for restarting the international opera season at Covent Garden after the war she devoted herself so wholeheartedly to the details of operatic management that she soon knew all the most prominent artists and agents of Europe and was able to set a standard which the present Covent Garden Opera Syndicate has been happy to follow.

After being responsible for several successful seasons of opera her connection with Covent Garden came to an end through circumstances over which she had no control. Indeed, it would not have been surprising had she retired from further public activity in the cause of music. It is a strange fact that nobody but the large public, whose voice is never heard and who are quite powerless in these matters, appreciates the active work of an amateur and pioneer in any field however neglected it may be. Mrs. Courtauld suffered, as all disinterested and eager workers suffer, from jealousy, suspicion, and malice on the part of those who looked upon her as an interloper and interferer in places where they considered themselves as absentee landlords with an hereditary or acquired right to neglect. Gradually, however, all those who came into personal contact with her were compelled to acknowledge her courtesy and her honesty, and whatever opposition and difficulties she met with were due to the fact that her disinterestedness, her high standards, and her ambition to do well were such rare phenomena as to be positively embarrassing.

Mrs. Courtauld never wished to assume the most promi-

nent position. She was quite content to be the fairy godmother and bring the gifts, provided they were used for the good of music. In her freedom from cliques and her broad, generous outlook she was so conspicuous as to be almost unique in these days of partisanship when a " patron " of the arts or of any art when it comes to action generally turns out to be nothing more than the patron of a particular artist. Being an Englishwoman, she was proud when she could obtain the first performances of new English works, but being an Englishwoman and not some disguised alien, she did not exploit the public by giving them inferior English works and depriving them of the opportunity of hearing all good foreign ones in order to obtain popularity with the false patriots. Some of her efforts to support English music and English musical institutions cannot be mentioned by me because they were never made public, but I can say that they were not always received in the tactful, generous, and unselfish manner in which they were proffered.

Perhaps the most fruitful of all her efforts was the Concert Club. This was a new and excellent idea, and in carrying it out her exceptional organising talent found a splendid opportunity. There is no need to explain the purpose of the Concert Club to many readers of this paper, for numbers of them are members of this admirable society, but a few words on its development will not be amiss. In selecting as musical director Dr. Malcolm Sargent, who has always loyally collaborated with her, she made a choice that proved itself to be a good one. She might have chosen other conductors who would have done as well and she might not, but whomever she had chosen she would have stuck to her choice until the association was broken by mutual consent, for she was not of that charming modern type that complains of and criticises its associates behind their backs. The first year of the Concert Club was such a success that in its second year each concert had to be given twice over on two successive nights at the Queen's Hall in order to accommodate all the subscribers. Now this is a phenomenon without parallel in the musical life of our country within living memory. I do not think anywhere in the press this fact has been pointed out with sufficient emphasis. It was natural enough that at this result all other concert-giving societies were dumbfounded. Some of them had been carrying on for a hundred years, and for many years had been in the position of having a third or a quarter of the Queen's Hall empty for their single concerts.

What was the secret of this extraordinary success? What was there in Mrs. Courtauld's policy—apart from the ingenious subscription basis of moderate prices and the enrolment of private musical clubs among the members of big institutions and business firms to take advantage of this subscription plan—which caused it to win such a huge and enthusiastic following? The secret is simple. Mrs. Courtauld did not give the public what she thought it might like or what she thought it ought to like, she simply gave the public an opportunity of hearing what she had found from experience that she herself liked. That is to say, the Concert Club, instead of being run, as most concert-giving institutions and as most theatres are to-day, by syndicates or committees who are always seeking to find out what it is the public likes in order to make money out of it, was the creation of an individual, like the theatre of the old actor-manager who had a definite personal policy.

It has turned out that what Mrs. Courtauld enjoyed in music thousands of other people have also enjoyed. Mrs. Courtauld never attempted to obtain large audiences by engaging mere celebrities and newspaper " stars." Hers were not in any sense celebrity concerts, but musical concerts. The greatest of her celebrities and her personal friend, Artur Schnabel, was not a celebrity in this country until recently. His name does not even appear in the last edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music*, although every eminent musician on the Continent, from Richard Strauss to Schönberg, knows him as one of the leaders of music in Europe to-day. It was left to Mrs. Courtauld to introduce to us the conductor, Otto Klemperer, from Berlin, who was unknown here, although at least a dozen inferior foreign conductors had been visiting us for years. This season we are to hear a pianist practically unknown in London, Horowitz, who is to give a Concert Club recital on April 11th. Singers such as Sigrid Onegin, Frida Leider and Emmi Leisner were practically introduced to London by Mrs. Courtauld, and of English soloists names such as Lionel Tertis, Beatrice Harrison, Beveridge Webster occur to me among those who have been included in her programmes. Another exceptional merit possessed by her concerts was the artistic character of their programmes. Contemporary music has been represented there by Sibelius, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Bax, Schönberg, Elgar and Delius, and she was anxious to include works by the younger generation of English composers, and would have done so had she lived. Fine but little-known compositions by the great masters have been a feature of her concerts, and she has made us more familiar with neglected composers such as Mahler and Bruckner. But, above all this, each programme has been selected with a care and a good taste rare indeed in the concert-giving world.

Finally, I should like to refer to the economic side and quote some figures supplied by Mrs. Courtauld before her death. During the past two seasons " eighteen Courtauld-Sargent concerts were given, at a total cost of £12,307. Of this figure, 19 per cent. was paid to foreign musicians, 51 per cent. to British musicians, and 30 per cent. went in other expenses incurred in this country." Let those who attack foreign musicians also remember that out of their 19 per cent. the foreigners have to pay our English income tax, railway fares and living expenses. Surely from the economic point of view alone this is an admirable and wholly fruitful example of international intercourse, and who but a fool or a madman would want to stop it? But I should not like on the sad occasion of this article to stop on this note. Let me finally, in memory of a true amateur of music, quote from Mrs. Courtauld's last public communication, made to the *Daily Telegraph* on November 11th :

" From the purely commercial point of view it appears to me the worst policy to attempt to limit still further the engagements of foreign artists. As a last word, may I say what many others besides myself believe—that music is not a trade or a charity; it is the purest form of art, and it is supernational. This truth may be left for musicians to expound."

And, now that we no longer have Mrs. Courtauld and her fine, generous passion for music with us, let the musicians expound Mrs. Courtauld's last word.

W. J. TURNER.

FIRST WINTER SNOW

THE snow has come down.
God's kindness is white on the wold.
He has covered the darkness with light,
The mud with strange gleaming.
Now all harshness shrinks dreaming,
Transformed by the cold.

And the foul rotting Death,
Once a corpse without breath,
Hath purely his might,
And bewitches us quite.
See ! he dances half mirthful
And shimmers pearl-white.
He has bright silver buckles
On hand and toe-knuckles,
And stars in his skull.

HERBERT E. PALMER.

A FRIENDLY ENCOUNTER

WE were walking from the high down towards the stream below by a path hedged about by young oaks, whins and tall bracken which gave place here and there to gorgeous clumps of bell heather and ling. He was coming up, and we saw him some time before he caught sight of us, because we had nothing to do but to look about us and admire the beauties of this lovely miniature glade, while he was very busy.

Partly because we did not wish to disturb him, and partly in the hope of watching him more closely, we halted, by common consent, and froze into immobility. His progress towards us was slow, yet active, for he was for ever darting this way and that, pouncing upon insects that were, to us, invisible. Every now and then he paused to scratch his left ear.

I don't think he became aware of us until he was only about three or four yards distant. It was at some such distance that he dived under a tuft of grass and emerged with a slim beetle which I could see in his beak. The beetle had to be turned endways before he could swallow it. He lifted his head in the act, swallowed the beetle with deliberation, then turned his head sideways, bringing his little, round, black eye to bear full upon our faces, and studied us with every appearance of friendly curiosity. Then the movement of some insect attracted his attention: darting, he caught and ate it; took another look at us, much as if he would say, "Could you do that?" and again scratched his left ear.

If he had ever regarded us with apprehension—and, somehow, I feel sure that he had not—he was by now well assured that he had nothing to fear from us. He just went on with the business of the day; and it brought him nearer and nearer to my feet. After each successful raid he paused to ruminate and look knowingly at us as if inviting our applause. We maintained our immobility; but we ventured to exchange observations in low tones by which he was not at all disconcerted.

The bold friendliness of robins is proverbial, but never before have I experienced the emotional thrill of such friendly advances on the part of a bird met by chance in the course of a country walk. The robin of your garden, who sits on the handle of the spade, or the edge of the wheelbarrow, and darts down upon the tit-bits you disclose as you work, is charming, but less wonderful because he is in daily contact with mankind and has had every chance to learn that, in this country at least, he is a very welcome guest. Whether he owes his immunity and, indeed, the affection in which he is generally held to his own engaging ways or to a very lovely legend of the Crucifixion, there are few people in these islands who would wilfully hurt a robin. But our friend was a young robin, with only faint tints of red beginning to show upon his breast, and we met him far from any human abode. Therefore we felt a certain foolish pride in the confidence he gave us.

But the fullest proof of his trust was yet to come. He came to my feet; he passed between me and the stick on which I leaned, just pausing to snatch an insect on the way; then passed on to where She stood, with the Offspring, a few feet behind me. There was now a newly awakened interest in his inspection of us. The date was August 30th, 1931, and, *mirabile dictu*, the day was sunny and warm. Many flies buzzed about us, or settled upon us. He examined Her skirt attentively, scratched his left ear again, gave it up and came back to me. Twice he flew up and tried to snap a fly off my stockinged leg; and once I felt the impact of his beak as he missed the fly. They were too quick for him and, as it were in disgust, he flew off into the bracken beside us. So we passed on and left him.

We returned that way about an hour later and kept a sharp look-out for him, though little hoping that we should meet him again. But we did. He was perched on a stalk of bracken very near to where we had left him. We stopped to look at him and, cocking his head on one side, he returned our gaze as friendly as ever. He looked so utterly carefree that I felt a touch of envy. "He is one of the lucky ones," I said, "he is not worried about the pound sterling or anything else."

He looked at me quizzically, snapped at and caught a flying insect, and scratched his left ear.

MORYS GASCOYEN.

THE WOLVES OF TANNERS CLOSE

AT the New Theatre you can see, as the programme leaflet says, "a real old-fashioned drama played in old-fashioned style"—or rather melo-drama. You may shudder; more probably you will be ironically amused, and if you are an elderly playgoer you may also enjoy noticing how much the world has changed since, as a thrilled urchin, you were taken as a treat, and not without parental misgivings that it might intensify your night-fears, to the old Adelphi. Such, indeed, was the main source of my own pleasure, though I recognised that Mr. Tod Slaughter was making an excellent ruffian, Miss Jill Peters a beautiful victim, Mr. George Slater a fine, sinister, cold-blooded, intellectual villain—in fact, that the whole cast, good characters as well as the bad, were fulfilling the company's boast that this was "melodrama as it should be played." I enjoyed it more than the more ambitious *The Anatomist*, a play on the same theme. That disappointed me, because—what waste!—the horrors were kept in the background, interest being centred upon Dr. Knox, the surgeon who bought without inquiry fresh corpses from Burke and Hare, and upon a love affair which had nothing to do with the story. Mr. Ainley's study of the winking scientist was not interesting enough to compensate for the absence of melodramatic horrors. In *The Wolves of Tanners Close*, on the other hand, at least we had the excitement of seeing Burke and Hare dispose of two victims and the body of a third. Moral: If you choose a sensational theme, squeeze every thrill out of it you can. The only fault I had to find with the performance at the New Theatre was that the ruffians dispatched the poor prostitute too easily; they spared our nerves.

Otherwise Miss Walter's melodrama was made up according to classic prescription: a noble, generous young sailor; women more sinned against than sinning; degraded yet partly comic scoundrels; an icy, superior villain; and a good priest who points to Mercy Above. The cast rose to the occasion, but the audience did not. They seemed stupefied by the naiveté of the concoction offered them. When I was a boy we hissed villains when, at the end of each act, they passed in front of the curtain. I can still recall the main villain's smirk and bow of satisfaction when he was greeted with a storm of boos and hisses, the highest compliment that could be paid him. The noble characters, on the other hand, were cheered and clapped, irrespective of the merits of their acting. At the New Theatre I noticed the audience did not lose themselves in a rapture of moral indignation nor in admiration of virtue, but discriminated between the skill of the performers, notably in the case of Mr. Geoffrey Carlile, who played the part of the amiable acute loony. Times have changed. Old melodrama rested on the sharp division of mankind into sheep and goats, and on the faith that virtue triumphed inevitably and wickedness was defeated. The "crook play" has superseded it. Moral values are never used as a main ingredient in the crook play. Our interest is centred upon the ingenuity of crime and upon criminal efficiency pitted against the efficiency of law and order. Noble sentiment is excluded, though a little feminine pathos is allowed. Hardly any comic relief is required. Times have changed; "melodrama" is dead. DESMOND MACCARTHY.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Max and Mr. Max"

A CURIOUS, diverting, unsatisfying mixture, this comedy from the Spanish of Jose Lopez Rubio and Eduardo Ugarte at the Vaudeville Theatre, but certainly a play to visit. How far Mr. Cecil Madden is responsible for its incongruities must be left, unfortunately, to conjecture—I never see the word "adapted" on a programme without feeling ill-used. But obviously the strange affair of Max and his Conscience (with what sleek self-esteem did Mr. Clarke-Smith play that immaculate Alter Ego!) is being no more than Spanish in its refusal to be pinioned too tightly by mundane logic in a world of fantasy. Who speak the tongue that Calderon spake will never dogmatise upon the difference between is and is not. Thus after a really brilliant first act built on the fancy, peculiarly acceptable to a British audience, of a young man being lectured by his Self-authorising Imperative seated in the opposite armchair, the authors allow their metaphor to run wild. Conscience, defeated (apparently, though not actually) before the bedroom door of a sprightly young lady, whose eyes rain hospitality, is persuaded, for a bet, to become a human being, and at once makes as big a fool of himself as his former victim has become already. Finally, the young lady's husband, from whom, by way of an innocent prank, she had bolted the night before, takes her away, the curtain falls, and you leave the theatre muttering unhappily. Mr. Nicholas Hannen, who plays Max and produces, has not altogether succeeded in working him into the general pattern. He is interesting and individual, but his woes are too sincere for their context. I have nothing but admiration for Mr. Clarke-Smith, and for Mr. Edmund Gwenn splendidly solid and absurd as a husband. Miss Kathleen O'Regan wrestles in vain with the impossible part of the provocative but innocent young lady, though for the life of me I cannot think of anybody in England who could play it better.

"The Gay Adventure"

Inevitably the trumpets must be sounded for the return of Seymour Hicks to the West-end in a part which is almost perfectly suited to his unique talents. He is the same Seymour Hicks as ever; but nobody who values the expressive art beyond the merely convincing could wish him to modify by a hairsbreadth his uncannily complete repertoire of look and gesture; and it is an unavoidable misfortune for the other male members of the cast that beside him they can never appear more than half-alive. Mr. Hackett, let it be said at once, offers them little scope, for *The Gay Adventure*, like some of its predecessors at the Whitehall Theatre, is a rather blatant rehashing of early good ideas. Still, it is nearly all good Hicks or good Marion Lorne—and that is much. Greedy for still more of Mr. Hicks in his white-waistcoated element, I could have wished away the sword-and-cloak interlude in which he sees himself as his ancestor, D'Artagnan. For once the maxim that a thing done is always more effective than a thing told proved false. He is cruelly hampered by costume and a dim light, and I would have given all the duelling and nay-tarry-fair-one incidents to have been present at the dinner table from which the vision grew and watch him listen and wonder and doubt as the realisation of the responsibilities of romantic ancestry crept into his diffident suburban soul. The rest of the play is plain Hackett, deserving neither description nor comment, except a tribute to the loveliness of Miss Nora Swinburne, which may not be resisted.

"Aladdin" at the Lyric

Sir Nigel Playfair has done it again. *Aladdin: or Love Will Find a Way*, burlesques the traditional pantomime very nicely. Mr. Clinton-Baddeley's couplets and songs are excellent parody, and so is Mr. Walter Leigh's music. The patriotic numbers are particularly good. Towards the end, the show began to sag, but Sir Nigel has a lot of talent in his company, and it only needs another turn by the incomparable horse, and a longer scene for the Fairy Dewdrop to make the last Act as lively as its predecessors. Miss Nadine March as the Fairy is the subtlest joke in the show; there is not nearly enough of her. Mr. Frank Birch exuberates most sumptuously as the Widow Twankey (a portrait of him in this role must quickly be painted for the Senior Combination Room at King's) Miss Marie Blanche has the right legs and the right high notes for the Principal Boy, and Mr. Clinton-Baddeley himself makes a fine villain in a make-up derived from Disraeli. I recommend *Aladdin* neither to children, nor to the stupid, nor to the very sophisticated. The audience which always supports Sir Nigel will find exactly what it requires. My only quarrel is with the scenery and costumes, which seemed to me neither funny nor charming.

Better Than They Have Said

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A FRIENDLY ENCOUNTER

WE were walking from the high down towards the stream below by a path hedged about by young oaks, whins and tall bracken which gave place here and there to gorgeous clumps of bell heather and ling. He was coming up, and we saw him some time before he caught sight of us, because we had nothing to do but to look about us and admire the beauties of this lovely miniature glade, while he was very busy.

Partly because we did not wish to disturb him, and partly in the hope of watching him more closely, we halted, by common consent, and froze into immobility. His progress towards us was slow, yet active, for he was for ever darting this way and that, pouncing upon insects that were, to us, invisible. Every now and then he paused to scratch his left ear.

I don't think he became aware of us until he was only about three or four yards distant. It was at some such distance that he dived under a tuft of grass and emerged with a slim beetle which I could see in his beak. The beetle had to be turned endways before he could swallow it. He lifted his head in the act, swallowed the beetle with deliberation, then turned his head sideways, bringing his little, round, black eye to bear full upon our faces, and studied us with every appearance of friendly curiosity. Then the movement of some insect attracted his attention: darting, he caught and ate it; took another look at us, much as if he would say, "Could you do that?" and again scratched his left ear.

If he had ever regarded us with apprehension—and, somehow, I feel sure that he had not—he was by now well assured that he had nothing to fear from us. He just went on with the business of the day; and it brought him nearer and nearer to my feet. After each successful raid he paused to ruminate and look knowingly at us as if inviting our applause. We maintained our immobility; but we ventured to exchange observations in low tones by which he was not at all disconcerted.

The bold friendliness of robins is proverbial, but never before have I experienced the emotional thrill of such friendly advances on the part of a bird met by chance in the course of a country walk. The robin of your garden, who sits on the handle of the spade, or the edge of the wheelbarrow, and darts down upon the tit-bits you disclose as you work, is charming, but less wonderful because he is in daily contact with mankind and has had every chance to learn that, in this country at least, he is a very welcome guest. Whether he owes his immunity and, indeed, the affection in which he is generally held to his own engaging ways or to a very lovely legend of the Crucifixion, there are few people in these islands who would wilfully hurt a robin. But our friend was a young robin, with only faint tints of red beginning to show upon his breast, and we met him far from any human abode. Therefore we felt a certain foolish pride in the confidence he gave us.

But the fullest proof of his trust was yet to come. He came to my feet; he passed between me and the stick on which I leaned, just pausing to snatch an insect on the way; then passed on to where She stood, with the Offspring, a few feet behind me. There was now a newly awakened interest in his inspection of us. The date was August 30th, 1931, and, *mirabile dictu*, the day was sunny and warm. Many flies buzzed about us, or settled upon us. He examined Her skirt attentively, scratched his left ear again, gave it up and came back to me. Twice he flew up and tried to snap a fly off my stockinged leg; and once I felt the impact of his beak as he missed the fly. They were too quick for him and, as it were in disgust, he flew off into the bracken beside us. So we passed on and left him.

We returned that way about an hour later and kept a sharp look-out for him, though little hoping that we should meet him again. But we did. He was perched on a stalk of bracken very near to where we had left him. We stopped to look at him and, cocking his head on one side, he returned our gaze as friendly as ever. He looked so utterly carefree that I felt a touch of envy. "He is one of the lucky ones," I said, "he is not worried about the pound sterling or anything else."

He looked at me quizzically, snapped at and caught a flying insect, and scratched his left ear.

MORYS GASCOYEN.

THE WOLVES OF TANNERS CLOSE

AT the New Theatre you can see, as the programme leaflet says, "a real old-fashioned drama played in old-fashioned style"—or rather melo-drama. You may shudder; more probably you will be ironically amused, and if you are an elderly playgoer you may also enjoy noticing how much the world has changed since, as a thrilled urchin, you were taken as a treat, and not without parental misgivings that it might intensify your night-fears, to the old Adelphi. Such, indeed, was the main source of my own pleasure, though I recognised that Mr. Tod Slaughter was making an excellent ruffian, Miss Jill Peters a beautiful victim, Mr. George Slater a fine, sinister, cold-blooded, intellectual villain—in fact, that the whole cast, good characters as well as the bad, were fulfilling the company's boast that this was "melodrama as it should be played." I enjoyed it more than the more ambitious *The Anatomist*, a play on the same theme. That disappointed me, because—what waste!—the horrors were kept in the background, interest being centred upon Dr. Knox, the surgeon who bought without inquiry fresh corpses from Burke and Hare, and upon a love affair which had nothing to do with the story. Mr. Ainley's study of the winking scientist was not interesting enough to compensate for the absence of melodramatic horrors. In *The Wolves of Tanners Close*, on the other hand, at least we had the excitement of seeing Burke and Hare dispose of two victims and the body of a third. Moral: If you choose a sensational theme, squeeze every thrill out of it you can. The only fault I had to find with the performance at the New Theatre was that the ruffians dispatched the poor prostitute too easily; they spared our nerves.

Otherwise Miss Walter's melodrama was made up according to classic prescription: a noble, generous young sailor; women more sinned against than sinning; degraded yet partly comic scoundrels; an icy, superior villain; and a good priest who points to Mercy Above. The cast rose to the occasion, but the audience did not. They seemed stupefied by the naiveté of the concoction offered them. When I was a boy we hissed villains when, at the end of each act, they passed in front of the curtain. I can still recall the main villain's smirk and bow of satisfaction when he was greeted with a storm of boos and hisses, the highest compliment that could be paid him. The noble characters, on the other hand, were cheered and clapped, irrespective of the merits of their acting. At the New Theatre I noticed the audience did not lose themselves in a rapture of moral indignation nor in admiration of virtue, but discriminated between the skill of the performers, notably in the case of Mr. Geoffrey Carlile, who played the part of the amiable acute loony. Times have changed. Old melodrama rested on the sharp division of mankind into sheep and goats, and on the faith that virtue triumphed inevitably and wickedness was defeated. The "crook play" has superseded it. Moral values are never used as a main ingredient in the crook play. Our interest is centred upon the ingenuity of crime and upon criminal efficiency pitted against the efficiency of law and order. Noble sentiment is excluded, though a little feminine pathos is allowed. Hardly any comic relief is required. Times have changed; "melodrama" is dead. DESMOND MACCARTHY.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Max and Mr. Max"

A CURIOUS, diverting, unsatisfying mixture, this comedy from the Spanish of Jose Lopez Rubio and Eduardo Ugarte at the Vaudeville Theatre, but certainly a play to visit. How far Mr. Cecil Madden is responsible for its incongruities must be left, unfortunately, to conjecture—I never see the word "adapted" on a programme without feeling ill-used. But obviously the strange affair of Max and his Conscience (with what sleek self-esteem did Mr. Clarke-Smith play that immaculate Alter Ego!) is being no more than Spanish in its refusal to be pinioned too tightly by mundane logic in a world of fantasy. Who speak the tongue that Calderon spake will never dogmatise upon the difference between is and is not. Thus after a really brilliant first act built on the fancy, peculiarly acceptable to a British audience, of a young man being lectured by his Self-authorising Imperative seated in the opposite armchair, the authors allow their metaphor to run wild. Conscience, defeated (apparently, though not actually) before the bedroom door of a sprightly young lady, whose eyes rain hospitality, is persuaded, for a bet, to become a human being, and at once makes as big a fool of himself as his former victim has become already. Finally, the young lady's husband, from whom, by way of an innocent prank, she had bolted the night before, takes her away, the curtain falls, and you leave the theatre muttering unhappily. Mr. Nicholas Hannen, who plays Max and produces, has not altogether succeeded in working him into the general pattern. He is interesting and individual, but his woes are too sincere for their context. I have nothing but admiration for Mr. Clarke-Smith, and for Mr. Edmund Gwenn splendidly solid and absurd as a husband. Miss Kathleen O'Regan wrestles in vain with the impossible part of the provocative but innocent young lady, though for the life of me I cannot think of anybody in England who could play it better.

"The Gay Adventure"

Inevitably the trumpets must be sounded for the return of Seymour Hicks to the West-end in a part which is almost perfectly suited to his unique talents. He is the same Seymour Hicks as ever; but nobody who values the expressive art beyond the merely convincing could wish him to modify by a hairsbreadth his uncannily complete repertoire of look and gesture; and it is an unavoidable misfortune for the other male members of the cast that beside him they can never appear more than half-alive. Mr. Hackett, let it be said at once, offers them little scope, for *The Gay Adventure*, like some of its predecessors at the Whitehall Theatre, is a rather blatant rehashing of early good ideas. Still, it is nearly all good Hicks or good Marion Lorne—and that is much. Greedy for still more of Mr. Hicks in his white-waistcoated element, I could have wished away the sword-and-cloak interlude in which he sees himself as his ancestor, D'Artagnan. For once the maxim that a thing done is always more effective than a thing told proved false. He is cruelly hampered by costume and a dim light, and I would have given all the duelling and nay-tarry-fair-one incidents to have been present at the dinner table from which the vision grew and watch him listen and wonder and doubt as the realisation of the responsibilities of romantic ancestry crept into his diffident suburban soul. The rest of the play is plain Hackett, deserving neither description nor comment, except a tribute to the loveliness of Miss Nora Swinburne, which may not be resisted.

"Aladdin" at the Lyric

Sir Nigel Playfair has done it again. *Aladdin: or Love Will Find a Way*, burlesques the traditional pantomime very nicely. Mr. Clinton-Baddeley's couplets and songs are excellent parody, and so is Mr. Walter Leigh's music. The patriotic numbers are particularly good. Towards the end, the show began to sag, but Sir Nigel has a lot of talent in his company, and it only needs another turn by the incomparable horse, and a longer scene for the Fairy Dewdrop to make the last Act as lively as its predecessors. Miss Nadine March as the Fairy is the subtlest joke in the show; there is not nearly enough of her. Mr. Frank Birch exuberates most sumptuously as the Widow Twankey (a portrait of him in this role must quickly be painted for the Senior Combination Room at King's). Miss Marie Blanche has the right legs and the right high notes for the Principal Boy, and Mr. Clinton-Baddeley himself makes a fine villain in a make-up derived from Disraeli. I recommend *Aladdin* neither to children, nor to the stupid, nor to the very sophisticated. The audience which always supports Sir Nigel will find exactly what it requires. My only quarrel is with the scenery and costumes, which seemed to me neither funny nor charming.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

I WAS a few weeks over eleven years old when I first saw Ellen Terry. I had only seen one famous player, J. L. Toole; though possibly among the clowns at Hengler's were some who subsequently gained greater glory in Paris, where the great clowns go. My first sight of Ellen Terry is memorable to me for three other reasons. It was my first unaccompanied visit to a theatre; it was my first visit to the pit; it was my first sight of Henry Irving. I was at a London school which gave us a Wednesday and a Saturday half-holiday. On Wednesday, skipping my meal, I walked, by way of Smithfield Market, Saffron Hill, Chancery Lane, Lincoln's Inn, to familiar Booksellers Row (where Mr. Poole's bookshop was), to the pit entrance of the Lyceum Theatre, then—this is the early nineties—in the Strand, I think. There were already, at a little after one o'clock, a great many people, but, thank Heaven, this was before the days of the regulated, chair-sitting, pavement-artist-entertained queue. We were just a mob, and the opening of the doors was a signal for a mob rush. Very immoral, no doubt, unsocial and deplorable—at least, so I should find it now. Then it was fun and an opportunity for a small, late arrival. Perhaps there were a hundred people in front of me, perhaps a hundred and fifty; all I can remember is that they looked an innumerable multitude. When two o'clock came, however, and the doors opened, I went forward, I wriggled, I pushed, I dived, I was helped, I was hindered, I squirmed, I raced, I planked down my half-crown, I raced again, I took the benches hurdle fashion, and I landed in the middle of the front row of the pit. A disgraceful confession? Perhaps. Yet there was something to be said in favour of that old glorious, free-fight entry to the pit. No doubt it showed up some characters—mine, for instance—at their worst; but I still remember the encouraging cheer with which one jovial, buxom dame projected me under the arm of a gimlet-elbowed atomy of a bean-pole fellow, and how two earnest young lovers, who had perused the book of the words during the wait, of their own free will stepped aside in their rush, blocked the entry for a moment from the pursuing mob, and let me through with a murmured, "Let the little chap have his chance." I may not have behaved very well, but I was the cause of considerate conduct in others.

* * *

The play was *The Merchant of Venice*. I have neither the memory nor the fancy necessary to say how every moment of that afternoon's traffic is still with me. What I can remember is Ellen Terry's presence and voice and movement, as if sunlight and lovely sound had come together, and Irving's tremendous, thunder-like progress, a black storm broken by the flashes of sinister humour. That afternoon was recalled to me as I read Mr. Gordon Craig's *Ellen Terry and her Secret Self* (Sampson Low, 15s.). This book may easily outlive all other books of the year. It is better, I think, than the author's *Henry Irving*, partly because its subject is a rarer human being than Irving was, partly because the author approaches his theme with a tenderness, a gaiety, and a rare sense of the loveliness of what he is handling. Formally, the book is a statement of the conflict between Nelly, the mother, the artist in life and love, her own possession and her loved one's and Ellen Terry, the great actress, the inheritress of the tradition, whose discipline and duties are so much stricter than the duties and discipline of the world. Mr. Craig seems at times to think that his mother was too obedient to that discipline, or, if not to discipline, to the subsidiary duties which popular opinion has added to the player's life. Would she have been a better actress and a happier woman if she had pursued, say, the path of Duse instead of, in her own enchanting and incomparable fashion, at one moment being as natural as Duse, at another as theatrical as Bernhardt? I do not think we can tell. All we know is that fate, or the demon of the trap-door, threw her into a working life with the one actor in Europe who was pure theatre, who, when he was off the boards, took his stage with him, and was capable of being his own hero, villain, manager, footlights, prompter, and curtain. Irving needed, for his acting, nothing but an audience, and that he always had. Ellen Terry, with a natural genius really as great as Irving's, had not his craft or his unpardoning zeal for the work. He threw them over her, and for years she moved, sometimes helped, sometimes hampered, but always in a way with her natural powers enhanced.

* * *

There is much of Ellen Terry's fascination in this book. It is in no sense a formal biography, but the discreet will discover that its apparent artlessness disguises a very personal and interpretative manner. There is, too, much of Ellen Terry's humour, which I discover too many of her admirers forget. This, for instance, of Charles Kelly, E. T.'s second husband.

> I retain but a fleeting impression of something large and heavy-footed, a kind of stranger who, I thought, growled and clumped his way along the passages, whereas Mother had seemed to sing or whisper her way, and had flitted in and out.

It is a book of the theatre, this, and for those who love the theatre. A great many people think they love the theatre, and all the time they only love spectacle, or some dramatist, or the occasion, or the curious modern ingenuity with which actors act so that they do not act. This book is about people who acted, and acted for an audience who could understand acting and who demanded it. There is one wonderful and exquisite passage in which Mr. Craig describes a rehearsal of *Cymbeline* at the Lyceum. It is all good, but perhaps the best is the end.

> We are aware that the chief is moving now—he is going to act. E. T. has now turned her head, because she never missed a moment when H. I. was going to act: and H. I. is just about to show Ben and myself how a young savage should not stand when he is grieving over a dead friend—and H. I. would have done so but he caught E. T.'s eye looking at him . . . and that immediately has a disastrous effect. Instead of a parody of our poses, he really does something so astoundingly beautiful that no actor on earth or off it could have caught it and gone and done likewise. . . . It was often thus that Irving acted at rehearsals in that warm, sunlit, magic spot, the Lyceum stage, with the amber lights slightly checked. A few of us were aware how remarkable were his performances of the characters he was not down in the programme to play; but on many they were entirely lost. I always regret that E. T. was not present at the night rehearsal when Irving was showing Haviland the way to play the part of the Fool in *King Lear*, Act 2. With, "Let me hire him too—here's my coxcomb," in slithering, far-off tones, he feathered on to the stage—sideways—lopped an imaginary cap, and floated two steps, till he alighted on the edge of a table, where he smiled once—and then blew out the smile.

* * *

Mr. Craig writes critically of some aspects of his mother's work, and writes with authority and good sense. He is as severe as anyone could wish about the hopeless parts Irving sometimes gave her. "She loathed them, which put her in such an obstinate, intolerant mood that she never would bring herself to learn the lines." I wonder if the necessity of getting through these parts, with the long speeches, at once unwritten and unspeakable, was partly responsible for the poor memory from which she suffered in her later years? Whatever Mr. Craig intended in his book, he must be congratulated on portraying not only Nelly, but the great Ellen Terry as well; his portrait of her is far more life-like and more beautiful than could have been done by someone who never knew Nelly. Of the great players she has been lucky. This book, her own book, and her letters will keep her real for posterity to a degree that is the lot of few.

RICHARD SUNNE.

J'ACCUSE LA FRANCE

Behind the Scenes of International Finance. By PAUL EINZIG. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

Here is the book providing those who have long been suspicious of the financial policy of France with proof. Dr. Einzig has collected together all the damning circumstantial evidence on which the wickedness of French diplomacy may be presumed. If I had not known the author as a financial expert and as the money market editor of a prominent financial paper, I should have been tempted to dismiss the book as hearsay evidence written up into an engaging "story" by a clever journalist devoid of a sense of realities. But Dr. Einzig must know what he is talking about and should be in the position to obtain the facts. He has marshalled his case as a barrister would do, avoiding technicalities, reciting his points dispassionately and concisely (all within 154 pages) but concluding every argument with a most ferocious accusation. The effect is deadly. His main contentions are that it is the French reparations policy which has prevented the financial consolidation of Europe since the war; that it was the French gold hoarding policy which brought about the slump in commodity prices—the major cause of the world trade depression; and that it is the unwillingness of France to co-operate constructively with the other Powers which is the principal obstacle to an economic recovery. He writes:

> On the ruins of the wealth, prosperity and stability of other nations, France has succeeded in establishing her much-desired politico-financial hegemony over Europe. She has attained this end by means of a carefully devised and skilfully executed scheme of financial warfare which has inflicted suffering and misery upon five continents . . . The reparations claims, war debts, loans, credits, gold movements, and foreign exchange operations have assumed the role hitherto played by divisions, battleships and air squadrons.

Dr. Einzig assumes that the aim of French foreign policy is to keep Germany in a condition of economic and financial inferiority. Most of us will be disposed to agree with that view. Up to 1926 the reparations policy was the only weapon at the disposal of France, for, with her currency depreciated and her finances in disorder, she was in a weak tactical position. And reparations were inadequate to keep the Germans down because British and American loans and credits enabled them to meet their liabilities and reconstruct their industries. After the stabilisation of the franc the situation entirely changed. Dr. Einzig traces the origin of France's gold hoard to the following sources: (1) repatriation of French capital which took flight abroad during the inflation period; (2) France's profit on foreign holdings of francs; (3) France's excessive share in German reparations payments; (4) repudiation by France of four-fifths of her external liabilities in francs; (5) unduly generous terms on which the French war debt to Great Britain and the United States was funded; (6) artificial export surplus through the stabilisation of the franc at an unduly low level; (7) sterilisation of the gold hoard, thus preventing the normal reactions which would tend to check the inflow.

The account of the uses which France made of her newly acquired financial power is the most controversial part of Dr. Einzig's book. From the restoration of the gold standard in France in June, 1928, to the suspension of the gold standard in Great Britain in 1931, France imported gold from London to the amount of £136,000,000. Dr. Einzig argues that whenever relations between France and Great Britain became strained, the franc moved against sterling and gold flowed from London to Paris. Whenever there was a tendency towards political *rapprochement*, the gold efflux subsided. The first attempt to influence British external policy by means of gold withdrawals, he alleges, was made in 1929 on the occasion of the Hague Conference in August and September. Mr. Snowden's firm stand, Dr. Einzig adds, cost the Bank of England the loss of £20,000,000, its gold stocks falling below £150,000,000. On the occasion of the Second Hague Conference in January, 1930, the gold withdrawals were resumed when negotiations for the mobilisation of German reparations annuities caused another clash between British and French financial interests. There were other points of dispute—Dr. Einzig cites, for example, the Jugoslavian stabilisation scheme and the place of location and the appointment of directors of the Bank for International Settlements—which served to accentuate the differences between the French and British treasuries, but it was not until the Credit Anstalt affair in May, 1930, and the rapid development of the German financial crisis that French financial policy was seen in all its naked nationalism.

From the time of the Austrian collapse onwards, diplomacy was dropped: financial war was declared. The price of French help to Austria was given out plainly as renunciation of the proposed Customs Union with Germany. When the Bank of England stepped in with an unconditional loan of £5,000,000 the French press showed the utmost fury, but their Government only had to wait till September for its complete victory. The French banks having called in their funds from Germany in 1929 and 1930—under political pressure—the French Government could watch the development of the financial crisis in Germany with a sense of lively satisfaction. Between July and the middle of September, the big French banks withdrew between £40,000,000 and £50,000,000 from London. "Admittedly," says Dr. Einzig, "there was no trace of withdrawals on the part of the Bank of France and the French authorities. At the same time nothing was done in Paris in the early stages to check this movement, though it was bound to lead to a collapse of sterling."

In September the Bank of England was obliged to ask for the repayment of its Austrian loan. Austria was forced to capitulate and to submit to the French conditions of financial aid—the abandonment of the Customs Union. Finally the pound sterling fell. Dr. Einzig gives an interesting account of how the Bank of France stipulated for the earmarking of gold as security for its support of sterling and how Mr. Montagu Norman fought against such terms and was overruled and went on a voyage for reasons of his health. With the departure of Mr. Montagu Norman the French financial victory was complete. A little later France was able to isolate Italy by bribing her allies—by granting loans (of very moderate amount) to save Hungary and Bulgaria from collapse. The height of French financial power was seen in the extraordinary bargain with the United States. The dollar was attacked and the result of the Hoover-Laval armistice was that France agreed to leave her deposits in New York provided America left the initiative in the matter of reparations policy to France.

Dr. Einzig does not suppose that France will maintain her political influence by financial means for any length of time. In the next few years her resources will decline rather than increase. An important change has already occurred. Great Britain has withdrawn herself from the influence of French financial power by suspending the gold standard. "There is an old-fashioned game called Ombre," writes Dr. Einzig,

> in which the player who holds no trumps is in a stronger position than the player who holds them all. It sometimes happens that the man who holds all the trumps, and triumphantly declares 'grandissimo' is defeated by an opponent who unassumingly declares 'nullissimo.' It was just in such a way that the cards of International Finance were called in September of 1931 . . . On September 20th, it was announced that it had become necessary for Great Britain to suspend the gold standard. That was Great Britain's 'nullissimo' in answer to France's 'grandissimo'."

Dr. Einzig writes so fluently that it is necessary to remind the reader that he is drawing his conclusions from circumstantial evidence only. There can be no actual proof that France uses her gold hoard as an instrument of her foreign policy. It is certainly very suspicious that whenever sterling depreciated and gold was withdrawn from London, the returns always showed an increase in the balances of the French Treasury and the Caisse d'Amortissements with the Bank of France, and that in October gold withdrawals from New York also coincided with such an increase. This can be interpreted in two different ways—either the French authorities contracted the resources of the French money market and therefore forced French banks to withdraw balances from abroad, or the French Treasury and the Caisse d'Amortissements were themselves selling sterling and dollars, the proceeds of their operations being transferred to the Bank of France. No one outside the French Treasury and the Bank of France can say positively what occurred. His conclusion is worth quoting:

> The conception is gaining ground that France has forfeited her rights to reparations by the destructive use she has made of her claims. In fact, it is now widely held that it is France who owes the world reparations for the damages caused by her destructive financial warfare.

It is a pity that this text cannot be framed and hung upon the walls of the room in which the next Reparations Conference is held.

E. H. DAVENPORT.

THE NEXT WAR

What Would be the Character of a New War ? An Inquiry Organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Geneva. King. 16s.

This is the most terrible book which has ever been written. It is a symposium to which a score of experts contribute. They include soldiers, chemists, psychologists, engineers, financiers, sociologists, and physicians. Some of them write in the dispassionate technical vein in which a photographer might discuss the future of colour cinematography. Others write as humanists, overwhelmed by noble passions whilst attempting a scientific inquiry. But whether the tone is warm passion or the chill aridity of pure science, the effect is always the same. The pages read smoothly enough as long as they deal with the tactics of mechanised armies, the organisation of industry for war, and the effect of war on national finance. But the later chapters deal with the use of aircraft to break the civilian will for war : and these pages are terrible. They pile nightmare on nightmare. They convince the most sceptical student that if ever war flames out again between civilised nations on the grand scale, the final chapter will see the survivors living much as the characters in Mr. Fowler Wright's *Deluge* existed after the inundation of England.

The man in the street has a vague notion that the next war will somehow be more terrible than the last. He realises, for example, that Sheffield will be as permanently in the front line as Ypres was constantly under fire in the last war. But he has about as much idea of what Sheffield would suffer as some dear old village granny in Cornwall had of what the Passchendaele fighting was really like. He supposes that air raids will be executed on a greater scale, with increased frequency, and across wider distances. He knows that aeroplane bombs are now more powerful than the largest which Zeppelins brought over fourteen years ago. He may even have heard of the " death dew." He may perceive that panic-stricken civilian populations will confront governments with serious problems. But he has in general not the very tiniest notion of the definite technical facts which are propounded in this volume. And he imagines that with the aid of gas masks and underground shelters and the protection of fast " interceptor " planes, London or any other city would not suffer much more than the raided cities in 1914–1918.

The sections of the book which most deserve public attention are those which deal with aerial attack on civilian populations. The laboured discussions about the kind of campaign which mechanised armies would fight is the familiar heavy Staff College stuff, and pales in importance by contrast with disclosures which suggest that the next war may well be won and lost before its professional land soldiers have ever fired a shot at each other.

The first important admission is that all air experts acknowledge the futilities of air defence against bombing raids. Searchlights, guns and interceptor fighters can drive bombers skywards if those bombers are manned by living crews. To-morrow, if not to-day, a belligerent nation must prepare for raids by empty aeroplanes, carrying no pilots, and controlled by wireless from a distant base or from a control aeroplane flying invisibly at some fantastic height above the raiders. Such empty aeroplanes could, of course, be shot down ; but they would be so constructed that their lethal cargoes of explosives or incendiary material or poison gas or blistering dew would be automatically distributed on contact with the ground. Assuming that a war breaks out before such manless machines are constructed in large numbers, anti-aerial defence can assuredly make raiders climb to their ceiling, supposing that the defence is on the alert and efficient. (Incidentally, not one city in a hundred would possess aerial defences if war began at brief notice.) When bombers are forced to great altitudes, they cannot drop their bombs with accuracy on small objectives, but they can assuredly hit a city ; and a city, rather than a building or a group of buildings, will be their target.

The correct mental picture is, therefore, that a series of raids are made at short notice or without notice on the principal cities of the enemy. The Great Powers dispose of from 1,500 to 2,000 war aeroplanes apiece, of which perhaps 30 per cent. are bombers. These bombers would be supplemented by the standard commercial air liners, which are easily convertible to war service in a few hours. The number of bombers required to put a large city out of action varies according to the cargo which they carry. One chemical contributor estimates that a couple of machines, distributing a certain chemical, would suffice to put London out of a war : but as inventors and scaremongers always exaggerate, let us assume that a belligerent decides to employ 300 bombing machines against London. The service experts all admit that the majority of these 300 aeroplanes would get over London, possibly at a great height. They would be sent in waves. The first wave would carry high explosive, including individual bombs weighing a ton apiece. The entire squadron would bring far more explosive than fell on London during the whole of the Great War. A ton bomb will destroy a whole city block ; it will wreck any subterranean shelter which is roofed with less than 80ft. of solid earth or 13ft. of reinforced concrete. The effect of the first wave would be to drive the entire population underground, kill many thousands of people, and disorganise all public services, including food supplies. Psychologists estimate that the morale of a nation would be so wrecked by this fearful visitation that the few heroic people would be submerged in a complete collapse of character. On the heels of the first wave would arrive the second wave of raiders, dropping incendiary bombs filled with thermite, which burns at 3,000° Celsius, and cannot be put out by any known extinguisher. These bombs are so light and compact that thousands could be dropped. They would multiply their frightful effects with the aid of broken gas mains and blazing petrol stores. The people, crouching underground, would soon be aware that over their heads London was a sea of flame. The final wave of raiders would drop poison gas and vesicant dew. The poison gas, being heavier than air, would penetrate the underground refuges, excepting those protected by airtight doors and supplied with pure filtered air by tall conduits protruding above the gas level in the blazing streets. The vesicant chemicals are so noxious that a man will die if three drops touch no more than his foot : and their effect is semi-permanent, in that they can kill weeks or even months after they have been sprayed on a city. By a refinement of cruelty all these lethal substances can be dropped in containers fitted with time fuses, so that fresh outbreaks occur periodically, long after the raiders have departed. In the face of these horrors it is hardly necessary to discuss such final abominations as the dropping of bacteria in the enemy's water reservoirs.

It takes two to make a war : and the aggressor's cities can, of course, be raided with similar effect. Since the only real defence is to destroy the enemy's bombing fleets in their hangars, it is probable that the aggressor would begin by raiding his enemy's air bases, and after their partial or complete destruction would proceed to bomb the enemy civilians into panic and helplessness and surrender. The risk of war without notice is thereby multiplied past imagining. Such schemes make it doubtful whether the professional foot soldiers of the two nations would ever come to grips at all. In any case, the normal series of war is reversed. In former wars the land army was always the centre of gravity at the outset ; and the decision was only transferred on to the shoulders of civilian endurance at a far later stage. In the next war the civilian population will be the first objective, and a rapid victory may be secured by their early and complete collapse.

GEOFFREY WEALD.

THE ASCENT TO PARNASSUS

Common Sense About Poetry. By L. A. G. STRONG. Gollancz. 2s. 6d.

Mr. Strong does not lack courage, for he is attempting something on which not even the most literary-evangelical of professors have ventured. Even popularisers such as Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch begin their cajoling lectures on poetry by presupposing a disposition in their audience to learn something about the art. But Mr. Strong is a grim realist who has knocked about in the world of English boys, schoolmasters, farmers, sportsmen, and general folk, and he knows their incurable shyness towards poetry and the poetic interpretation of life.

What the reason is for this shyness it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to say. Many foreign critics have observed the paradox that England has produced great poets in abundance while her general populace persistently refuses to cultivate its senses, and insists on regarding poets as cranks, effeminates, degenerates, and poseurs. " As the poet says " is a phrase in everybody's mouth, and it is always used in a half-contemptuous way. Maybe the curse of Puritanism—that diabolical principle of dualism which has dictated so many of the laws, and founded so many of the social customs both here and in America—is

responsible for this perverse and conceited attitude, as indeed it is responsible for half the nasal cant and humbug which are so unpleasant a part of our national character. Other people will dispute this as a cause; but since poetry is so much a matter of graceful gesture, so much "a dance of the soul before its God," I cannot help feeling that a religion preoccupied with negations must have a lot to do with the obstinacy, the self-satisfied ignorance, which confront poetry in this country.

At any rate, Mr. Strong has gone out as a missionary amongst the barbarians, though he is too tactful to call them that. He has supplied himself with all sorts of tempting tit-bits such as picturesque references and analogies, concrete comparisons and witty explanations, and has done his best to persuade his market-place audience that he has nothing up his sleeve and that he is only a simple fellow himself, just as they are, except that he has made the adventure into a world of riches which they refuse to look at. And then he performs a miracle. He puts before these Doubting Thomases a view of the realm of poetry and says, "Look, here is a direct road into it. Come with me!"

And they are coming! How could they do otherwise? For he is the most persuasive guide in the world—a Virgil who disarms his followers by asking them to carry his rod of authority while he talks to them of how he used to lose his way here, and how over there he once came a heavy cropper and narrowly escaped missing the magic land altogether. Again and again he begs them to take things easily. One of the refrains running through his book is, "Don't read what bores you. Put it by for a bit, and try again later." And also he constantly emphasises the fact that what *he* says is only *his* opinion. "In this book I have tried quite humbly to act on my own principles. One has to lay down the law in places, if a book is not to be gutless and amorphous: I have said what I feel and believe, and you must take it all with a good pinch of salt, believing nothing which does not seem convincing. What you think is what matters to you. The dissemination of second and third and fourth and fortieth hand opinions is too well looked after at our universities for anyone else to be concerned about it."

Such is the spirit in which he sets out to explain sufficient of the technical and æsthetic principles by which poetry is to be distinguished from prose. Never once does he allow himself to frighten his quarry by raising his voice to the prophetic and cosmic utterance adopted by the mighty ones—notably Wordsworth, who spoke of his art as being "the wisdom which is in the face of all science," and Shelley who claimed that poets are "the legislators of the world." That is right enough when one is able to understand what the full significance of poetry is; but such statements only startle the man in the street. At the best he shrugs his shoulders and turns away in despair. At the worst he makes a rude face and murmurs, "O ye—eh!" feeling as so many modern people do that to express cynicism one must adopt a talkie-film accent.

No; Mr. Strong having been a schoolmaster has had long experience as a breaker-in of the human colt, and he is more worldly-wise than the uncompromising giants, who were aided by the tide of the Romantic Movement to rise to such heights in their claims for the oracular function of the poet in the social scheme. His book is, indeed, what it claims to be, common-sensical, with a curtain drawn before the inner mysteries and agonies of poetry and the poetic life. Only occasionally does he give the curtain a twitch—an act as much humorous as malicious—as though to hint how these self-satisfied philistines, once they *do* venture into the haunted land—beauty haunted, thought and music haunted—will find their flesh creep, and all their comforts and certainties and sound moral investments come tumbling down.

But to harp too much on this would spoil the trap which Mr. Strong has so guilelessly laid. Let him carry on the good work, showing the technical devices of the craft, the tricks of rhyme, assonance, alliteration, onomatopœia, and, above all, the subtleties of speed possible in our glorious English verse, due to the conflict of measure and accent within the fixed line-length. Coventry Patmore has dealt exhaustively with this important element in English prosody, but he is not for the million. I know of no more simple explanation of it than that offered by Mr. Strong. With Mr. Greening Lamborn's *Rudiments of Criticism*, published fourteen years ago by the Oxford Press, this book should stand as the best primer on the subject of poetry as a craft and as a means of awakening one's dormant sensibilities, or as Matthew Arnold put it, "a criticism of life."

RICHARD CHURCH.

THE DOUGLAS THEORY OF CREDIT

The Monopoly of Credit. By C. H. DOUGLAS. Chapman and Hall. 3s. 6d.

Ordeal by Banking. By W. ALLEN YOUNG. Cecil Palmer. 2s.

There is much in the "Douglas Theory" of credit which deserves consideration. The notion that the making and management of the money, termed credit, by which most of modern buying is conducted, can safely and usefully be left to the private profit-making enterprise of banks is less likely than ever to commend itself to reasonable men and women. The claim that the money by which trade is conducted should be publicly owned and controlled seems as sound as the claim that our highways shall not be handed over to private highwaymen. For it is quite clear that the expansion and contraction of the supply of this money are of literally vital import to the community, and that these processes are conducted in times of boom and depression in such ways as to aggravate those maladies. In other words, we have no security that the profitable conduct of the banks coincides with the safety and welfare of the community whose "money" they provide. During the greater part of the long depression through which this country has been passing, the joint-stock banks have been one of the few prosperous industries. Why?

But when we turn to the specific criticism of Major Douglas and his disciples, doubts and difficulties arise, doubts as to the exact significance of statements prefaced by the words "It is clear" and "It is obvious," and difficulties connected with his account of the nature of the deficiency of purchasing power which is responsible for the inability to operate fully the productive resources of the economic system. The deficiency of purchasing power, it would seem, arises from the fact that a business man engaged in a productive process normally makes use of some bank-made money which he obtains by means of an overdraft and uses for wages and other running expenses. These wages and other expenses go into costs of production and selling prices, and the recipients of those bits of income might seem able to buy the product. But if they did so, how is the business man enabled to pay back to the bank the overdraft,

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together with the interest for its use? In order to do so, the price would have to be raised by the addition of the overdraft *plus* interest, and the product could not be bought (and therefore could not be produced) unless the bank spent the repaid overdraft in helping to buy it. This process tends to bring industry to a standstill.

This indeed would happen, if on each occasion of a sale, the price must include a lump sum for repayment of the overdraft. But it does not. In normal trade the same overdraft helps to finance a long series of acts of production. The "cost" which is represented in the selling price does not include the overdraft but only the interest upon its use. If trade is growing the overdraft is likely to be increased, but that does not mean that there is any lack of purchasing power to buy everything that is made. It is true that at the beginning of a depression the calling in of these overdrafts precipitates the fall of prices, makes trade unprofitable, and checks production. But that is another story.

Mr. Allen Young, accepting the Douglas theory of an insufficiency of purchasing power, develops a bold proposal for meeting the insufficiency by a process of Treasury vouchers representing a discount upon the prices of goods, in effect a Government subsidy of credit. To most readers, this project will appear as a large scheme of inflation. Is it legitimate to assume, as these writers do, that there is a deficiency of purchasing power? May not the admitted excess of producing power over consumers' demand be attributed not to a lack of producing power but to a maldistribution that induces the rich to endeavour to save for investments a larger proportion of their incomes than can find employment in the purchase and operation of productive capital?

J. A. HOBSON.

THE BOOKSELLER

The Private Papers of a Bankrupt Bookseller. Oliver and Boyd. 7s. 6d.

He stands in the dark of the shop, hanging back a little so as not to embarrass the visitor who comes to read and finger rather than buy. The shelves, "close-smelling of print and binding glue and the dust of yesterday," are ranged haphazard and invite search, though the light makes it difficult; there is a good deal of old stock, beside the *Home University Library*, and Benn's sixpenny poets; at the back a desk, littered with accounts, and a doorway in which a cat hesitates: it is a bookshop much like any other. The bookseller (as his self-portrait emerges from these *Private Papers*) is, like many other booksellers, antiquated and birdlike and aloof. He loves books, their names, their smell, their morality. His favourite books he scores in the margins with pencil, to keep the customers from buying: books of which he disapproves—*Maria Monk*, *What Every Young Man Should Know*—are thrown on the fire as soon as unpacked from the auctioneer's odd lot. He reads Debrett, Hume, *Aurora Leigh*, the Bible, the *Songs and Ballads of Greater Britain*, and almost every conceivable book that falls between. On either side of his shop are a butcher and a lady's draper—disenchanting trades. His own is the noblest calling. His life is spent between two shelves of books, "two parallel straight lines, as I remember from Euclid, extending to infinity." He wants his shop to be like an old print of the French bookshops in the Palais Royale. "I would like my shop to be like that, well-filled bookshelves and graceful ladies. I aim at elegance . . ." But in fact he is ugly, and seeks consolation in the biographies of ugly men. One day he overhears a pretty girl in the shop: "I wish this pimply faced prig of a bookseller would hurry. I have to be at Madame Austin's at eleven." Yet when he was in France he was the most popular man in his platoon! Then he was hit on the head after Loos, and it made him "more fanciful than before, but happy with it." Two years of bookselling were like heaven, but there were debts; fine books from the publishers, not paid for; a demand from the bank, not met. He had a dream in which he flew timelessly, endlessly beyond the rafters among the stars; and he began falling, falling:

> A vertigo took me. My mind was falling out of my body. I was going mad. I only saved myself by leaping out of bed and holding myself against the wall of my room.
>
> . . . .
>
> I say it is too bad.
> Such experiences ought not to come to booksellers.

Very odd. Then for a few pages he writes about books as prizes; wavers, quotes Cleopatra's dying speech, and ends. They found him with his head in a gas oven. The draper next door who found him and has taken over his shop introduces this book hoping it will "interest those who care for booksellers and their point of view." Very odd! The bookseller had something like a touch of genius.

KENYA

A Last Chance in Kenya. By NORMAN LEYS. Hogarth Press. 8s. 6d.

Dr. Norman Leys' *Kenya*, published in 1924, was an event of first-class importance. Admirably written, its informing passion always under control—for Dr. Leys is far better as an author than as a controversialist—it built up a terrible indictment, not against individual settlers, but against the system of land ownership, of taxation, and of servile labour in existence in Kenya. The British public was for the first time squarely confronted with the question whether a system of administration fundamentally opposed to the boasted principles of English colonial government, as well as in flat contradiction of our pledges as "trustees," should be tolerated in Kenya. The controversy has raged ever since, and, in spite of a long series of inquiries and commissions, still remains unsettled. Dr. Leys' indictment has never been answered, and his opponents were forced into a search for such minor errors of fact as they could find in his book. In his new book he handsomely acknowledges one small error as a "serious blunder," and then proceeds with a telling calm to restate the position as it is to-day. The statement could scarcely be bettered. All the merits of the first book are in this one. Dr. Leys exposes once again, with the necessary modifications, the basic economic inequity of the system, the disproportion of the taxation and the unfair use made of its yield; he describes the obstacles put in the way of native production and the methods used to induce natives to become servile labourers on white plantations. The contrast with the highly successful system of native production in Uganda and Tanganyika strikes every visitor to East Africa. He gives examples, with chapter and verse, of scandals of justice that have constantly disfigured administration in Kenya, and which are, indeed, inevitable under the system permitted

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there. Most interesting of all, perhaps, is his discussion of "African mentality." The notion sedulously promulgated that Africans are congenitally incapable of advance to the level of civilised mentality has received many shrewd blows of late, and the unwillingness of the whites to give native Africans any proper educational opportunities is in itself enough to make an impartial person suspicious of the claim that Africans cannot "advance." In fact, we deliberately preserve ignorance and superstition. (In Kenya 5s. a year is spent on educating an African child and more than fifty times this sum on educating a white child). Nothing did so much to undermine our British superstition about the inherent inferiority of the African as the obvious capacity of the native witnesses who came to give evidence before the recent Joint Committee. The kind of mentality represented by Sir Edward Grigg, who has, one presumes, had opportunities of education as well as an unusual chance, as Governor of Kenya, of observing and working with natives in Africa, is, one hopes, now disappearing. I am not sure that there is anything so devastating in Dr. Norman Leys' book as his quotation from Sir Edward, who told the Joint Committee that "*The African, of course, has no views at all.*" The African always had views. The great event which has occurred between the publication of Dr. Leys' first book and the present one is that these views, which Sir Edward has not deigned to notice, have become articulate and even clamorous. It is that fact which justifies Dr. Leys' title. We have only a last chance in Kenya before the natives take up their own cause.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Lairds of Dun. By VIOLET JACOB. Murray. 16s.

This is a rather disappointing book. Its value for students of Scottish life and history cannot be denied, and much learning has gone into its pages. But Mrs. Jacob's reputation, and the subject she had chosen—the story of the Erskines of Dun—leads one to expect a good deal more than one finds. "The Erskines were always clever," an Erskine once affirmed; and certainly that house has left its mark on Scotland, in affairs of State, or in the lesser affairs of Angus. Sometimes turbulent, sometimes peaceful and idealistic, like the Erskine who was a friend of Wishart and Knox, sometimes simply odd, they were as lively a family as one could hope to find even in Scotland, land of lively families, and one might expect that their story too would be lively. But perhaps a family chronicle is too solid matter for a lyric poet. Mrs. Jacob, at least, seems to have succumbed beneath it. It is not often that the prose of a poet, even a minor poet of localised reputation, raises the old distinction between books that are literature and books that are justified only by their practical value, the information they convey. But that distinction must arise in estimating the *Lairds of Dun*, and it is for its practical value alone that it can be recommended and praised without reservation.

The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature. By HAR DAYAL. Kegan Paul. 18s.

In a flash of inspiration Dr. Dayal compares the Bodhisattva doctrine, which arose as a protest against the selfish "soul"-saving of the early monks (arhats), with that of St. Francis, and the Bodhisattva who practised and preached the doctrine with the Franciscans. His exposition of this doctrine and his account of its preachers are learned and closely documented. The book, indeed, is in essence one great bibliography of its subject; and, incidentally to its main theme, gives as clear an account of Buddhism generally as the confusion of its thought and the paradoxes of its beliefs permit.

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

IN my last notes I discussed the new recordings of several well-known symphonies. I must add a note about Dvoràk's *New World Symphony* and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*.

The respect commonly paid to Dvoràk as a symphonic writer by English musical criticism is really quite extraordinary, particularly when we realise that this respect is denied to the far more able and constructive Russian composers such as Borodin and Balakireff.

The *New World Symphony* is a curious example of misapplied talent. No one would deny the work a warmth of colour and a pleasant invention, but the material is quite unsymphonic and the treatment even more so. The composer cannot even get from one little tune to another without the noisiest of gear changes, and his attempt to impose a formal coherence on the whole work by the sudden quotation of earlier material is a purely superficial device entirely lacking in the intensity or inner logic of Berlioz' "idée fixe." The slow movement where, on the whole, the composer avoids either mechanical repetition or deliberately "musicianly" development, and contents himself with a simple statement of mood, is by far the most satisfactory. More than justice is done to the work by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra who excel in this straightforward and warmly coloured music. (H.M.V. ordinary catalogue, five 12in. D 1893–7 in album).

To turn finally to Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* would completely convince one of the gradual decline of symphonic writing did one not realise that this work is a symphony in name only and that twentieth century achievement in this tradition cannot be judged without reckoning with the magnificent works of Sibelius. Dvoràk's works have at least a geniality of invention, but the material of Stravinsky's new work is either arid or painfully banal and in either case short-winded to a degree. I know that a certain school of thought maintains that a good work can be written on trivial material, on the analogy (false, to my mind) of the cathedral constructed from individually uninteresting stones. But the material of the *Symphony of Psalms* undergoes no real transmutation and is merely hammered into us with Stravinsky's old solemnity of repetition, though accompanied on this occasion by pseudo-classical not pseudo-barbaric colouring.

I suppose one should not question Stravinsky's sincerity, but to me this work reeks of the self-consciously simple, fashionable religiosity first popularised by Jean Cocteau in the Home, Sweet Home, straight talks with fishermen mood that preceded his flirtations with surréalism.

Columbia showed enterprise in bringing this work out before its first English performance. (The Walter Straram Orchestra and the Alexis Vlassof Choir under the composer. Three 12in. LX. 147-9.)

CONSTANT LAMBERT.

* * *

The December records of the two chief English gramophone companies are of the kind that convention would expect at Christmas time. The Continental recordings are certainly more interesting. While in the Continental list appears a very fine Brahms sonata, we must console ourselves with carols, games and old songs. The National Gramophonic Society alone attempts to

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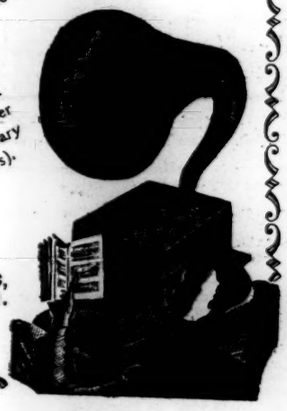

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LIFE AND LETTERS to become a Quarterly

After the December issue, Life and Letters, edited by Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, will be published as a Half-Crown Quarterly, commencing March 1st, 1932.

It will be considerably longer, though in character and appearance it will remain the same.

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satisfy a more developed musical taste. They have issued a very fine recording of Warlock's *The Curlew* (W. B. Yeats), as performed at the recent Memorial Concert. This work has been admirably conducted, and Mr. John Armstrong (baritone), Mr. R. Murchie (flute), Mr. T. McDonagh (English horn) and the International String Quartet have succeeded in making an interesting rendering. Warlock's music has a large following among professional musicians, but only a limited appeal to ordinary persons interested in music. I, for one, find the part given to the baritone very displeasing; it is distinctly too rich in its effect against the instrumental parts so full of shadows and echoes.

Three attractive works appear in the foreign lists, a new Mozart Divertimento for eight wind instruments (H.M.V., A.465) played by members of the Berlin State Opera Orchestra and conducted by Blech; Brahms Sonata in G major Op. 78 (H.M.V., A.468–70), Adolf Busch (violin) and Rudolf Serkin (piano), and Borodin's Symphony No. 2 in B minor (H.M.V., A.461), played by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Coates.

The wind Divertimento does not represent Mozart at his best. It fails to reach the level of his other wind Divertimento already recorded, and the playing does not hide its defects. The flutes sound harsh and piercing and seem to be played without reference to the other instrumental parts, while the conducting is rather too fiercely competent.

Busch and Serkin give a really remarkable performance of the Brahms sonata. Without disparaging the other recording played by Menges and Samuel, the new version is infinitely better. Busch, one of the best violinists of the day, is particularly happy in his interpretations of Brahms.

Borodin's second symphony exemplifies both its virtues and his defects. An insistent rhythm dominates every movement, making the larghetto somewhat fussy. On first hearing, on a modern gramophone, when the bars are exaggerated, the mind can only grasp the rhythm. When, as in this performance, every device of the conductor exploits and aggravates this defect of rhythm, the symphony becomes monotonous. The listener is not beguiled but heavily drugged.

A.

Is it fair to your best friend to make him your Executor? The duties are onerous, and usually thankless; the responsibilities are great and the penalties for neglect are severe. Moreover, he may die, and the expense of appointing his successor is considerable. On the other hand, if you appoint the Westminster Bank instead, the fees (which are paid out of your estate) will probably be only a fraction of the legacy which you would have left to a private trustee

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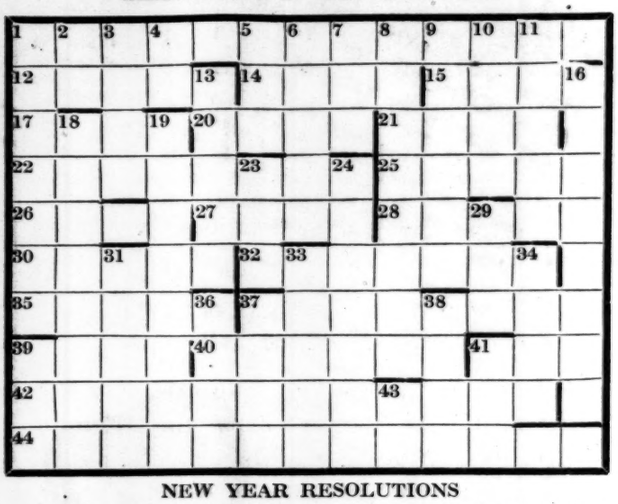

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Certain clues are italicised. The words required represent what the persons referred to in these clues might well resolve to be in the New Year.

ACROSS.

1. *Those who write for the "New Statesman and Nation."*
12. More than an epic, and less.
14 *rev.* Sweet, but not to Tompkins Minor.
15 *rev.* Tends 14 *rev.*
17. Authority on transmogrification.
20. Wenlock's is famous for its broom.
21. It is said to be lucky to be born with one.
22. Might well describe Mr. Robey.
25, 32. *The President of the U.K.A.*
26 *rev.* Provides a starchy food.
27. The higher the fewer.
28 *rev.* Is what his beasts become.
30 *rev.* What the pilgrim sought on 'Change.
32. See 25.
35. I spent a dozen years in a cloven pine, and am still not straightened out.
37. *The Poet Laureate.*
39. Confine to College.
40. I want a quota.
41 *rev.* Animals on tour.
42. *Trinculo.*
44. *Mr. MacDonald.*

DOWN.

1. Once common in huntin' circles.
2, 39 *dn.* Impels.
3. What an East-side Rhodes scholar at Exeter might call the street where his "work" is.
4. One of those who "sprang to the stirrup."
5. What Stalin might see in shredded wheat.
6, 10. *Caliban.*
7 *rev.* Singular form of 37 *dn.*
8. *Lord Beaverbrook.*
9 *rev.* The occupier's title is suggestive of decuple industry.
10. See 6.
11. His researches shocked the world.
13. Butchers' stock obtained from boiling water.
16. *Critic.*
18. *The Astronomer-Royal.*
19. *The Foreign Secretary.*
23. Was cabin'd, cribb'd and confin'd.
24. Shuffle after a bad deal.
29. Railway not infrequently encountered.
31 *rev.* Much appreciated by Omar.
33 *rev.* Curtailment of one of Mr. Locke's heroes.
34 *rev.* Astonishing development of the work of 11 *dn.*
36. Confusion in the nether regions.
37. What one might order at Child's.
38. Mussolini aims at preventing this.
39. See 2.
41 *rev.* Presumably, mightier than the sword.
43. There's nothing in M. Proust's denial.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. bread. 5. barmy. 9. sly. 12. yarns. 14. ocean *rev.* 16. (ro)se *rev.* 17. (Ro)me. 18. rieve. 20. doors *rev.* 22. (goph)ers. 24. teach. 26. lilac (A. Noyes). 28. tosh (host). 30. plane. 32. goph(ers). 34. Incas (Cain's). 36. Stein. 38. gat. 39. easle (easel). 41. cocky (leeky). 43. ri(bs). 44. P.S. 45. reach. 47. train *rev.* (*The Ghost Train*). 49. ure (rue). 51. prumt (trump). 53. snarl. 55. neat (herd). 56. dream. 57. tool (loot).

DOWN.—1. (ro)be. 2. rye. 3. ears. 4. arith(metic). 5. (ri)bs. 6. ane. 7. rash. 8. merle. 9, 10. soled. 11. cosy *rev.* (snug). 13. neeps. 15. coign. 17. -metic. 19. valse. 21. (neont)ology. 23. rones. 25. catch. 27. a-part. 29. scare (anag.) 31. neont-. 33. Leith *rev.* 35, 37. asept-icism. 40. la(i)rd. 42. Kant. 44. pun. 46. cur. 48. oar *rev.* 50. (so)re. 52. (s.)me. 54. ro-.

LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE.

Two solutions are consistent with the data.

	AT ONE TABLE.	AT THE OTHER TABLE.
(1)	Brown & Mrs. Smith. Smith & Mrs. Jones.	Robinson & Mrs. Brown. Jones & Mrs. Robinson.
(2)	Brown & Mrs. Smith. Smith & Mrs. Robinson.	Robinson & Mrs. Jones. Jones & Mrs. Brown.

I congratulate three solvers on discovering them both.

THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE

Four teams—the Arsenal, the Hotspur, the United, and the Villa—take part in an Association football competition. Each team plays each of the others once. Two points are awarded for a win and one for a draw.

The United score five points; the Hotspur, three points; the Villa, one point. Thirteen goals are scored in all, seven of these by the Hotspur; the Arsenal score no goals at all.

The Hotspur beat the Villa by four goals to one.

What was the score in the game between the Villa and the United?

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE COST OF 1931 TO THE INVESTOR—THE COMING DEFAULT OF EUROPE—HOME RAILWAY OUTLOOK—AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND STOCKS

IN the good old days, when the world was open to trade, and investors could look ahead more than a day, the stock markets in New York, if not in London, used to celebrate the New Year by an all-round rise in prices. Cheerfulness, at the advent of 1932, is conspicuous by its absence. As we dare not look forward, let us look back for a moment at the record of 1931. The investor in this country can, at any rate, congratulate himself that he has fared better than his brother-in-stocks in America. According to the indices of the Standard Statistics Company, the market values in New York of 337 industrial shares declined last year by 48½ per cent., of 33 railroad shares by 66 per cent., and of 34 utility shares by 10½ per cent., making a depreciation for the total of 404 shares of over 49 per cent. According to the figures of the Actuaries' Investment Index, which are published from time to time in the *Economist*, the decline last year in 41 industrial (production) shares was 16.4 per cent., in six home railroad stocks 38.6 per cent., in seven electrical supply shares 8.2 per cent., and in a total of 131 industrial shares (including production, distribution and utility) 22.7 per cent. Of course, the London Stock Exchange started the year less inflated in market values than New York and since September it has had the benefit of the depreciation of sterling in terms of gold. If we ignore the last fortnight in September, when London prices were rising and New York prices were falling, on the first shock of our gold suspension, it will be found that the two Stock Exchanges have followed a more or less parallel course for the past nine months. This implies that the decline in American and British equity stocks has been persistent except for a fortnight in June, when President Hoover intervened with his war debts holiday, and four weeks in October, when the gold prices of commodities (in particular wheat) made their false start upward. The trend at the moment is still downward. In New York, industrial shares were recently at their lowest since November, 1921, and railroad shares at the lowest levels ever recorded.

* * *

It would be foolish to forecast market movements in these critical days, but it seems pretty clear that unless the statesmen of Europe and America bring themselves to recognise hard economic facts, international trade will be brought completely to a standstill and our leading Stock Exchanges will be closed down. As long as Governments persist in trying to balance their national accounts by deflation and their international accounts by shutting out foreign goods, commodity prices will continue to decline and a glorious general bankruptcy will follow. Hungary is the latest country to suspend payments (on most of her debt). Roumania, which has acute banking trouble, is now under suspicion, and Newfoundland is having the greatest difficulty in meeting her January interest payments. (Rumour has it that Canadian banks are coming to the rescue.) Germany's predicament is clearly stated in the Basle report of the experts. By July, if a release has not already been granted, the Allies will be forced to default on their political debts to America. Great Britain, of course, can only speak for herself: and she must be careful what she says. The City as a whole, I feel sure, does not want to talk about repudiation. For the world's greatest creditor country (nominally) the use of the repudiation weapon would be highly dangerous. But there is no doubt that majority opinion in the City is strongly in favour of telling America that we cannot pay unless she takes our goods, for we have no free gold left to offer and no securities to issue that would be acceptable, and that we cannot pay in goods unless she lowers her tariff walls. American senators appear to believe that we can well afford our £48,000,000 tribute a year to America because it is little more than 5 per cent. of our total Budget figure. But the question is not how much money we can raise internally by another turn of the taxation screw, but how we can transfer £48,000,000 to America in goods with a prohibitive American tariff. A moratorium for our American payments to run concurrently with any further moratorium granted to Germany for her reparations payments would not allow world trade to recover. It would merely continue the suspense which is breaking down the credit system and killing international trade. Certainly there could be no revival in the Stock Exchanges if the sum total of political wisdom is merely to continue "stand-still" agreements and extend moratoria. Therefore, although there may be plenty of intrinsically sound equity stocks which look attractive at present prices, my advice to the investor is to stand as still as any frozen German credit while all this stupidity is stalking around.

* * *

The London and North Eastern Railway Company finds itself in an awkward position. Its net receipts this year, according to the most reliable estimates, will fall short of the amount required to pay the 4 per cent. dividend (£2,645,687) on its second preference stock and the nominal ¼ per cent. (£106,000) on its preferred ordinary stock by about £1,250,000. At the end of last year the general reserve fund was no more than £1,593,000. Is the Company prepared to reduce its general reserve to negligible proportions in order to pay the second preference dividends and a nominal dividend on the preferred ordinary? If it does not do so it will lose the trustee status for its prior charges and make future borrowing more expensive and difficult. It can, of course, apply to the Chancery Court for a special order to keep its debenture and guaranteed stocks within the trustee list, and as the ridiculous Trustee Act nowhere lays down an earnings test as the pre-requisite for trustee status, I feel sure that the Chancery Court will somehow accommodate the London and North Eastern. The London, Midland and Scottish is in a less difficult position. This Company is expected to earn only half its 4 per cent. second preference dividends of £1,605,359, but as the general reserve fund at the end of 1930 was £2,571,000, the deficiency can be made good by a transfer from reserve and a nominal dividend of say ¼ per cent. (£238,000) on the ordinary stock to maintain the trustee status of the prior charges "by order of the Court." The Great Western is expected to cover its prior charges and earn about 2¾ per cent. on its ordinary stock against 5¼ per cent. in 1930. It could pay a dividend of 3 per cent. on its ordinary stock without seriously weakening its reserves. The Southern will cover its prior charges and earn, it is estimated, nearly 4 per cent. on its 5 per cent. preferred ordinary stock on which the interim dividend has been reduced to 1¼ per cent. The following table shows the highest and lowest prices in 1931 of the preference and ordinary stocks, the present market prices and potential dividend yields:—

	Prices 1931. High.	Low.	Present.	Div. Yield %.
Great Western 5% cons. pref.	96½	63	70	7.33
Great Western ord.	69½	37½	43	6.98*
London & North Eastern 4% 2nd pref.	86½	28	29	15.46
London & North Eastern 5% pref. ord.	17¾	6¾	12	—
London, Midland & Scottish 4% 2nd pref. (1923)	55⅜	25½	33	12.67
London Midland & Scottish 8% ord.	34	12¼	17	—
Southern Rly. 5% pref.	92½	55	64½	7.98
Southern Rly. 5% pref. ord.	66½	35	36½	10.96†

* If 3% dividend. † If 4% dividend.

* * *

New Zealand is forming an exchange pool in London after the manner of Australia. It is not generally known that the Australian exchange pool gives priority to Government over commercial debts. (I hope M. Laval does not hear of this.) The external interest requirements of Australia—Commonwealth, State Government and Public Authority debts combined—are about £36 millions a year, or £31½ millions allowing for the war debts holiday. The Australian commercial banks in London are obliged to credit the Commonwealth Bank with £3 millions a month out of the funds accruing from the sale of Australian export bills. Payments due by Australian importers take second place. As the Australian exports in the current financial year are estimated conservatively at £86 millions (British) and imports at £49.4 millions (British), there is no further danger of an Australian default. The service of the New Zealand external Government debt amounts to about £8 millions per annum. That of the public authorities is less than £1 million per annum. For the first nine months of 1931 New Zealand exports amounted to £27.2 millions and imports to £19.0 millions. The exchange pool should therefore provide ample cover for the New Zealand external debt requirements. But is the market justified in valuing New Zealand stocks at 10 points or more higher than the Australian?

	Price.	Flat. Yield %.	Red. Yield %.
New Zealand 5% 1949	88	£5 13 6	£6 3 0
Australia 5% 1935–45	78½	6 7 4	7 13 0
New Zealand 3½% 1940	78	4 10 0	7 4 0
Victoria 3½% 1929–49	63	5 11 4	7 6 6

It may be added that in New York Australia 5% 1955 dollar bonds can be purchased at 50, if you have the dollars.

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CAMBRIDGE.	ELIZABETH of ENGLAND.	Th., S.
GLOBE.	AND SO TO BED.	Wed. & Sat.
HIPPODROME.	BOW BELLS.	Daily 2.30.
LYRIC.	AUTUMN CROCUS.	Wed. & Sat.
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QUEEN'S.	THE FARMER'S WIFE.	W., S.
ST. MARTIN'S.	THE NELSON TOUCH.	Tues. & Fri.
STRAND.	IT'S A GIRL.	Thurs. & Sats.
WESTMINSTER.	THE ANATOMIST.	Sat.
WHITEHALL.	THE GAY ADVENTURE.	W., S.
WYNDHAM'S.	THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY.	Sats.

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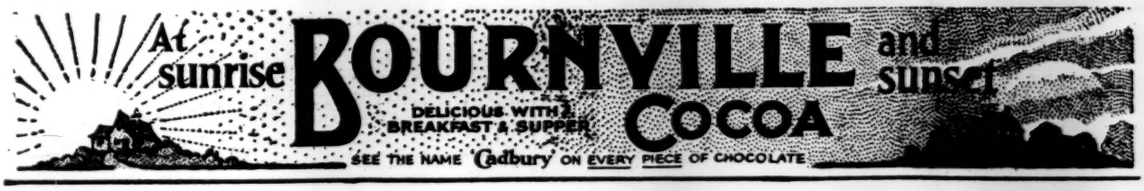
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